LIFE AND TIMES

OF

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.



MACHIAVELLI

from a bust in the possession of Count Bentivoglio

The Life and Times

OF

Niccolò Machiavelli

BY

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TRANSLATED BY

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FOURTH IMPRESSION

London

T. FISHER UNWIN

ADELPHI TERRACE



PREFACE TO THE NEW EDITION



HIS is the first complete English version of my book on "Machiavelli and his Times," the original translation, in four volumes, produced between the years 1878–83, having been considerably shortened to suit the convenience of its publisher. Whereas the two first volumes were issued intact with all the documents appertaining to them, the rest of the work was deprived of two entire chapters, and every document suppressed. One of the eliminated chapters treated of Art, and it was precisely in the Fine Arts that the Renaissance found its fullest and most distinctive expression. Niccolò Machiavelli, it is true, had no personal concern with the Arts, but they are so essential a feature of the national development of his period, and so closely connected with our literature, that it is impossible to understand either theme without considering the artistic life of the age. The second chapter omitted was of greater length, and even greater importance, being a careful account of all that has been written and thought regarding Machiavelli by critics of all countries at different times. It was therefore a necessary aid towards the due comprehension and appreciation of the man and his works. The political doctrines of the Florentine Secretary are not altogether individual creations of his own. To no small extent they

were the product of his times, and exercised a noteworthy influence on the events of subsequent ages. It was requisite, therefore, to examine the nature of this constant, yet ever-varying influence on the deeds and thoughts of those who have pronounced very contradictory verdicts on Machiavelli. Without such examination, the reader's mind would be inevitably perplexed by the crowd of conflicting opinions.

Hence, all will understand how gladly I accepted Mr. Fisher Unwin's proposal of bringing out a complete translation of my book, accompanied by all the more important documents, and particularly by some newly discovered private correspondence, and other inedited letters, written by Machiavelli when Secretary to the Republic. The whole translation has been again revised and collated with the original text, while, on my part, I have been enabled to insert a few corrections in historical details.

Strictly speaking, this is all that need be said. Nevertheless, I venture to add a few brief remarks.

So many books on the Renaissance have appeared of late, that it is only natural to regard the public as almost wearied of the theme, and on the point of refusing attention to anything connected with it. Therefore, I believe it may be useful to indicate what are the points of permanent value—not, assuredly, of my own work, but of its subject. I have shown elsewhere that I was impelled to study the Renaissance not only because we find in that period the primary source of many national qualities and defects, but because we may likewise discover therein the cause of many erroneous judgments passed on us by foreigners. Accordingly, the study of the Renaissance appeared to me to offer the best means of teaching us Italians to know ourselves, correct our faults, and tread the path of progress.

The Renaissance, however, was not isolated to Italy; it was also a period of much importance in the history of the rest of Europe. It was then that, by the revival of classic learning, reason was emancipated, and the modern individual first born and moulded into shape; hence investigation into the circumstances of the modern man's birth teaches us how to comprehend his character. If this may be said of mankind and civilization in general, it may be still more stoutly asserted with regard to the conception and character of

politics. The Middle Ages had no idea of the modern State, of which the Renaissance laid the first stone; no idea of the science of politics. Theoretically, the Middle Ages admitted no difference between the conduct of individual and of public life, between private and political morality, although, practically, the difference was then more marked than at any other time. In those days men often wrote like anchorites, while fighting tooth and nail like savages. The Renaissance, on the contrary, recognized, and even exaggerated, this difference; Machiavelli tried to formulate it scientifically, and, by force of his new method, founded political science. But, absorbed in pondering the divergences between public and private action, he pushed on relentlessly to extreme conclusions, without pausing to observe whether some link of connection might not be hidden beneath such divergence; whether both public and private conduct might not proceed from a common and more elevated principle. It was this that gave birth to the innumerable disputes, which, even at this day, have not yet come to an end. Nor is it easy for them to come to an end, when we remember, while admitting, in real life, that public morality truly differs from private, that on the other hand, we are sufficiently ingenuous—not to say hypocritical—to maintain that the essential characteristic of modern politics consists in conducting public business with the same good faith and delicacy which we are bound to observe in private affairs. This, as every one knows, is always the theory, not always the practice. Yet, unless voluntarily inconsistent, we are forced by this theory to judge Machiavelli with increasing severity, and his memory, therefore, is still held accursed. Often, too, we find him most cruelly condemned in the words of those whose deeds are most accordant with his views. As the matter now rests, the Machiavelli question is reduced, for many minds, to the single inquiry whether he was an honest or a dishonest man.

Hence, it was, first of all, necessary to separate the verdict to be passed on the man, accordingly as he should be proved honest or dishonest, from that to be pronounced on his doctrines; since of these it is requisite instead to ascertain the truth or the falsity, and to what extent they are true or false. This question, as I have endeavoured to prove, has a

practical, as well as a scientific value at the present day. If in real life we recognize a difference between public and private morality, then—since no one doubts the duty of always being honest—it becomes necessary to define the limits of this difference and investigate the true principles of political integrity. If, on the contrary, we deny this difference—which really exists—it follows that, in practice, everything must be left to chance. And this would be a triumph for those *politicians* who, while feigning the highest and most immaculate virtue, succeed in perpetrating actions equally condemned by every rule of public and private morality. The consequences of all this were far less noticeable in the past, when all States, not excepting Republics, were governed by a limited political aristocracy. Tradition and education then served as substitutes for principles. But in modern society, where all men may rise to power from one moment to another, the more tradition and education are lacking, the more urgent the need for principles. Hence, the best way to reach a final solution, is to study the problem from its birth, tracing its course, and noting what modifications it underwent both in theory and practice. At any rate, it is impossible to form an accurate judgment of Machiavelli without first arriving at a sufficiently clear conception of this problem.

Also, in examining a question of this kind, we are driven to investigate many others dating from the same period, and equally agitating to the modern conscience. It was during the Renaissance that unlimited faith in the omnipotence of reason first arose and led to the belief that society, human nature, history, and the mystery of life, could be successfully explained without the slightest reference to religion, tradition, or conscience. Endeavours were made, in fact, to explain all those problems, while taking for granted that neither the eternal, the supernatural, nor the divine, need be even hypothetically admitted. Then, for the first time, was asserted the vain pretence that it was possible for us to construct and destroy human society at our own pleasure: the very theory afterwards put to so fatal a test by the French Revolution, and of which a no less fatal experience is offered to ourselves, by those who still maintain that new states of society may be founded with

the same ease with which new systems of philosophy are invented. And as all these ideas simultaneously flashed on the human mind, after the close of the Middle Ages, men rushed at once to the logical consequences deduced from them, and with the greater serenity, because incapable of foreseeing eventual results. By examining these doctrines in the age of their birth we are better enabled to judge them, since, besides witnessing their logical consequences, we also perceive what direct or indirect influences they speedily brought to bear upon practical life. For we see the spectacle of a great people who founded the grand institutions of the Universal Church and the Free Communes, struggled victoriously against the Empire, created Christian Art, poetry, the *Divina Commedia*—and then note how that same people, changing its course, emancipated human reason, initiated a new science, a new literature, modern civilization, yet simultaneously destroyed its political institutions and its liberty, corrupted the Church, fell to the lowest depths of immorality, and became a prey to foreign conquest.

For all these reasons the biography of Niccolò Machiavelli cannot be restricted to the treatment of his individual work. It must necessarily investigate the rise and development of a new doctrine, manifesting in no small degree the spirit of an age, and personified in a man. This it is that constitutes Machiavelli's historical importance. Hence, a complete comprehension of the man is only to be obtained by clearly distinguishing that which was the product of his times from his personal achievement, even as it is necessary to distinguish between his individual character and the worth of his doctrines. We shall then more plainly discern the reason of certain contradictions to be found in Machiavelli. The deductions of the thinker are sometimes in tragical conflict with the forecasts and aspirations of the patriot, and an impartial study of this conflict will throw a new light on the man, his age, and his doctrines. Only thus, it seems to me, is it possible to arrive at the truth, and estimate Machiavelli with the strict justice that is the chief purpose of history. To what extent I have succeeded or failed in this, my readers must decide.

PASQUALE VILLARI.

when it initiated the revolution of 1859, by decreeing a new and complete edition of Machiavelli's works. To the insults then hurled against Italians in general, and the Florentine Secretary in particular, others retorted by lauding his political genius and purity of mind. Only a few years have elapsed since the appearance of a new "History of the Florentine Republic," written by one whose name is cherished and venerated throughout Italy. This work contains a very eloquent parallel, full of just and ingenious observations, between Guicciardini and Machiavelli. And the comparison concludes, not only to the advantage of the former writer, but also with the assertion that the latter was "malignant at heart, malignant of mind, his soul corrupted by despair of good."[1]

Nor was this a hasty judgment; on the contrary, it was the fruit of careful study, of long meditation, and pronounced by one whose word had no slight weight in Italy. The two Tuscan scholars who, in 1873, commenced the publication of the newest edition of Machiavelli's works, frequently allude to the close and cordial friendship they suppose him to have felt for Cæsar Borgia, even at the moment when the latter's hands were stained by the most atrocious crimes; and they even publish some inedited documents, the better to confirm their assertion.

On the other hand, more recent biographers, although not always agreeing upon other points, exalt the patriotism no less than the genius of Machiavelli, while some of them, after careful study of his works and of inedited documents, even praise his generosity, nobility, and exquisite delicacy of mind, and go so far as to declare him an incomparable model of public and private virtue. It seems to me that this is a proof that we are still far removed from harmony, and that new researches and fresh studies may not be altogether superfluous.

There were various reasons for this great and continual dissension. The times in which Machiavelli lived are full of difficulties and contradictions for the historian, and these are embodied and multiplied in the person of the Secretary, after a fashion to really makes him sometimes appear to be a sphinx. It is naturally perplexing to behold the same man who, in some pages, sounds the praises of liberty and virtue in words of unapproachable eloquence, teaching elsewhere principles of treachery and deceit, how best to oppress a people and secure the impunity of tyrants. Nor are these doubts dissipated by first seeing him faithfully serving his

[1] Gino Capponi, "Storia delle Repubblica di Firenze," vol. ii. p. 368, Florence, Barbéra (2 vols. 8vo), 1875.

Republic for fifteen years, then sustaining misery and persecution for his love of liberty, and afterwards begging to be employed in the service of the Medici, were it but "*to turn a stone.*" Yet the contradictions of history and of human nature are manifold, and in the present case would have been much more easily explained, were it not that most writers have sought to be either accusers or defenders of Machiavelli, judges—too seldom impartial—of his morality and of his patriotism, rather than genuine biographers. To many—particularly in Italy—it appeared sufficient to have proved that he loved liberty, and his country's unity and independence, in order to be lenient upon all other points; therefore they praise both his doctrines and his morals, even previously submitting them to a diligent critical examination, almost as though patriotism were a sure evidence of political and literary capacity, and necessarily exempt from vice and crime in private life.

This inevitably called forth opposite opinions, for which the contradictions noted above furnished abundant food. So that little by little the whole question seemed limited to an endeavour to ascertain whether the "Principe" and the "Discorsi" had been written by an honest or a dishonest man, by a republican or by a courtier, whereas what it really concerned us to know was the measure of scientific value of the doctrines contained in them; whether they were true or false, did or did not comprise novel truths, did or did not serve for the advancement of science? None can deny that if those doctrines were false, no virtue of the writer could make them true; if true, no vices of his could make them false.

Undoubtedly there has been no lack of influential writers who have undertaken an impartial and rational examination of Machiavelli's works, but these have almost always given us critical essays and dissertations rather than real and complete biographies. Absorbed in a philosophical examination of his theories, they either gave too little attention to the times and character of the author, or spoke of them as though every dispute might be settled by stating that Machiavelli represented the character of his age and faithfully depicted it in his own writings. But in a century there is space for many men, many ideas, many different vices and different virtues, nor do the times alone suffice to render clear to us all that is the work, the personal creation of genius. Nevertheless, it is, of course, necessary to study them in order to form a complete judgment of the doctrines of a writer who—as in Machiavelli's case—derives so much from them and yet puts so much of himself in his works. This is not, however, the place

for entering upon an examination of biographers and critics, of whom it will be my duty to speak farther on, in making use of their writings and giving frequent quotations from them. My present object is simply to announce that I have no intention of being either the apologist or the accuser of the Florentine Secretary. I have studied his life, his times, and his writings, in order to know and describe him as he really was, with all his merits and demerits, his vices and his virtues

This may probably appear to be a needless presumption, after the attempts already made by writers of greater authority than myself But thanks to historical materials of recent accumulation, and others which, though still unexplored, are now easily accessible, we have increased facilities for solving many of those doubts which previously seemed to present insurmountable difficulties. It is certain that publications such as the ten volumes of Guicciardini's inedited works,[1] the diplomatic correspondence of almost every province of Italy, an infinite number of other documents, not to mention the original works of Italian and foreign writers, have dissipated many obscurities and contradictions both in the literary and political history of the Italian Renaissance. Also the rapid progress of social science in our own days, naturally makes it much easier to determine the intrinsic value and historic necessity of that which many have called Machiavellism. And for all that relates to the Secretary personally, there are the papers which passed at his death into the hands of the Ricci family, then to the Palatine Library in Florence—where for a long time they were very jealously kept—and now, in the National Library, are accessible to all, and even partly published In the five volumes already issued by Signori Passerini and Milanesi of their new edition of Machiavelli's works, many useful documents selected from Florentine archives and libraries are comprised. Nevertheless a very considerable mass of highly important papers still remained unexplored. For instance, to my certain knowledge, there are several thousands of Machiavelli's official letters still inedited, and —as far as I know—never before examined by any biographer. This being the case, it seemed to me that there would be no undue presumption in venturing upon another trial

Were all biographies necessarily planned upon the same model, then indeed I might be exposed to severe blame. But I have thought it right to choose the form best adapted to the nature of the subject So little is known of Machiavelli during the years in which he completed his studies and his character was in course of formation, that I have tried, in part at least, to fill the great

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite."

gap, by a somewhat prolonged study of the times. I have endeavoured to examine the gradual rise in that century of what may be called the Machiavellian spirit, before he himself appeared upon the scene to give it the original imprint of his political genius, and to formulate it scientifically. Then, after having to a certain extent studied Machiavellism before Machiavelli, I drew near to him as soon as he became visible in history, seeking to learn his passions and his thoughts, as far as possible, from his own writings, and those of his most intimate friends and contemporaries. For without neglecting the examination of modern authors, I have always preferred to depend upon the authority of those closer to the events which I had to relate.

And this too has contributed in no slight degree to give a special form to this biography. Among the documents of most importance for the comprehension of Machiavelli's political life, the "Legations" must certainly be included, since these contain not only the faithful history of all his embassies, but likewise the earliest germs of his political doctrines. But although their value with this had been already noted—among others by Gervinus—these "Legations" had never been much read, partly because they are, of necessity, full of repetitions, and partly because, in order to be generally liked and understood, they would require a running commentary upon the events to which they allude. Therefore, to enable the reader to perceive with his own eyes the way in which our author's ideas were formed, I have frequently had to give summaries of, and even *verbatim* extracts from many of his despatches. And this far oftener than I could have wished—swiftness of narration in view of, but never oftener than I considered necessary for a full knowledge of the subject.

Then, too, the official letters written by Machiavelli in the Chancery form the indispensable complement of the "Legations." If the latter make us acquainted with his political life away from the Republic, the former teach us to know what it was at home. Many, of course, are of no value whatever, being simple orders given to this or that Commissary, and hastily repeating the same things over and over again. There are others, however, in which we find frequent flashes of the great writer's style, ideas, and originality. And the majority of these letters being—as we have shown—still unpublished, it was requisite to examine all with great care and attention. I therefore undertook this tedious and often ungrateful task, copying, or causing to be copied, some thousand letters, certain of which I have quoted in the foot-notes, from others given important extracts, while some few again I have transcribed *verbatim* in the Appendix, so that the reader might be

able to have a clear idea of their general nature. This, too, contributed to slacken the pace of the narrative, and try as I might, there was no remedy for it. It was impossible to leave unmentioned that which was, for so many years, Machiavelli's principal work; nor was it possible to speak of so vast a mass of unpublished letters without often quoting and inserting here and there a few sentences, especially since there is small hope that any one will undertake to publish them in full. It is useless to enumerate here all the other documents which I sought out and read; they can easily be ascertained from the notes and appendix. I will merely remark that during these researches I was enabled to give to the world three volumes of Giustinian's despatches, which were collected and examined by me, not only because of the fresh light they threw upon the times occupying my attention, but also because they enabled me to place in juxtaposition with the Florentine secretary and orator, one of the principal ambassadors of the Venetian Republic, and thus institute a comparison between them. When in 1512 the Medici were reinstated in Florence, liberty was extinguished, and Machiavelli being out of office, and fallen into the obscurity of private life, his biography then changes its aspect and is almost exclusively limited to the examination of his written works and the narration of the events in the midst of which they were composed. This, however, is the principal subject of the second volume, which, being still incomplete, cannot be placed before the public as soon as I should have desired. For my own part I should have preferred waiting until both volumes could have been published simultaneously. But in the long years during which my studies have been carried on, I have witnessed the publication of many fresh dissertations on, and biographies of Machiavelli, of documents, in many instances discovered and transcribed by myself; and so many other works bearing on the same subject are already announced, that it appears best to publish this first volume without further delay. Besides, this method of publication is now so general that many excellent precedents justify my adoption of it.

I must notify to my readers that in quoting from the works of Machiavelli, I have made use of the Italian edition, dated 1813, one of the be[illegible] present completed. I have, however, been careful to coll[illegible] with the more recent edition commenced at Florence in [illegible]873, but still far from completion, and deprived, by the death of Count Passerini, of its most energetic promoter. In this, a very praiseworthy attempt has been made to give a faithful reproduction of Machiavelli's original orthography. But in the many quotations inserted by me in the present work, I have

occasionally thought it advisable to expunge certain conventional and well-known modes of speech which were out of place in a modern work. This, however, I have done with great caution and solely to avoid the inconvenience of changing too often or too rapidly the material form of diction. In the Appendix, on the contrary, I have scrupulously and entirely adhered to the original orthography. The reader will also see that I have been frequently forced to disagree with the two learned gentlemen who bestowed their labours on the new edition, especially with regard to the importance and significance they have sought to attribute to some of the documents which they have already published. But to this I shall refer elsewhere, merely remarking here that I have no intention of questioning their undoubted merit, nor their care and diligence in publishing the documents, seeing that these are of great value to the biographer, and have frequently been made use of by myself.

To one erroneous notice it is imperative however to refer. In the Preface to the third volume, published in 1875, after deploring the loss of many of Machiavelli's letters, the editors go on to say: "It is a known fact that many volumes of his private letters, which were in the hands of the Vettori family, were for ever lost to Italy by being fraudulently sold by a priest to Lord Guildford, from whom they passed into the hands of a certain Mr. Philipps, who, during his life, preserved them and other precious things in his possession with such extreme jealousy, as to even refuse to let them be examined, much less copied, for the new edition of the Works of Machiavelli decreed in 1859 by the Tuscan Government, when a request to that effect was made to him by the Marquis of Lajatico, special ambassador to London. And although he (Philipps) is now dead and has legally bequeathed these letters and other things to the British Museum, we are still unable to make use of them, his creditors having come forward to prevent his will from being executed." Now it was impossible for me to write a biography of Machiavelli, without making every effort to gain a sight of the "many" volumes of private letters of which the existence was thus positively asserted. Setting inquiries on foot, I ascertained that Lord Guildford had really purchased in Florence three volumes of manuscript letters, the which were indicated in his printed catalogue as inedited letters of Machiavelli, and further described as a *literary treasure* of inestimable value. These letters were afterwards purchased by the great English collector of manuscripts of all kinds, Sir Thomas Phillipps, and were by him bequeathed, with the rest of his library, to his daughter, the wife of the Rev. E. Fenwick, and now resident in the neighbourhood of Chelten-

ham. To Cheltenham I accordingly went and at last held in my hands the three mysterious volumes The reader will readily appreciate my surprise, my disappointment, on discovering that in the whole three volumes there was only a single letter which could even be supposed to have been written by Machiavelli!

The volumes in question are in ancient handwriting, are marked in the Phillipps' catalogue, No 8238, and are entitled: "Carteggio Originale di Niccolò Machiavelli, al tempo che fu segretario della Repubblica fiorentina. Inedito."

The first letter—which has no importance—bears date of the 20th of October, 1508, is written in the name of the Ten, and at the bottom of the page has the name Nic° Maclavello, appended to it, according to the usual custom of the coadjutor who copied the registers of the Chancery. This is the sole letter of which the minute may possibly have been his, but we cannot be quite sure even of this. All the other letters—beginning with the second of the first volume—are dated from 1513, when he was already out of office, and the Medici reinstated in Florence, down to 1526. Always addressed to Francesco Vettori, now ambassador to Rome, now envoy elsewhere, always written in the name of the Otto di Pratica who succeeded to the Ten in 1512, the initials N. M. are to be found at the bottom of almost every page. Occasionally, however, we find the name of Niccolò Michelozzi, sometimes abbreviated, sometimes in full, and it was Michelozzi who was Chancellor of the Otto di Pratica during that period. The first letter, therefore, extracted from some register of the Republic, was placed at the beginning of these volumes, for the sole purpose of deceiving the too credulous purchaser, who had he taken the trouble to look at the dates, must have understood that the others could not possibly be by Machiavelli. So, having examined the catalogue of the enormous Phillipps's library and taken a few notes from other Italian manuscripts contained in it, I went back to Florence with nothing gained save the certainty of the non-existence of the supposed correspondence

And now one last word only remains to be said. It frequently happens that authors are pushed by some secret idea to the choice of their subject. What chiefly urged me to mine was, that the Italian Renaissance, of which Machiavelli was undoubtedly one of the principal representatives, is the period in which our national spirit had its last really original manifestation. It was followed by a prolonged slumber from which we are only now awakening. Hence the study of this period of our history may, if I am not mistaken, prove doubly useful to us, not only by acquainting us with a very splendid portion of our old culture, but likewise by

offering us more than one explanation of the vices against which we are still combating at the present day, and of the virtues which have assisted our regeneration. And the lesson will be all the more valuable, the better the historian remembers that his mission is not to preach precepts of morality and politics, but only to endeavour to revive the past, of which the present is born, and from which it derives continual light, continual teaching. This at least is the idea that has given me encouragement and comfort, by keeping alive in me the hope that, even far from the world and shut up with my books, I am not forgetful of the mighty debt, which now more than ever—in the measure of our strength—we all owe to our country.

1878.





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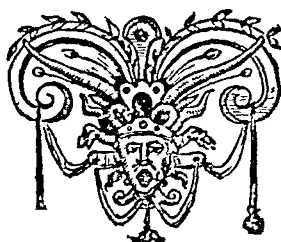
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THE LIFE AND TIMES

OF

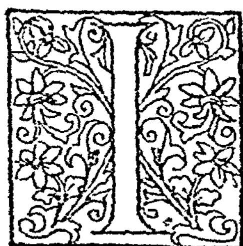
NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.

1469 — 1527 A.D.

INTRODUCTION.

I.

THE RENAISSANCE.



T would be difficult to find any period in the history of modern Europe equal in importance with that distinguished in History under the name of the Renaissance. Standing midway between the decay of the Middle Ages and the rise of modern institutions, we may say that it was already dawning in the days of Dante Alighieri, whose immortal works while giving us the synthesis of a dying age herald the birth of a new era. This new era—the Renaissance—began with Petrarch and his learned contemporaries, and ended with Martin Luther and the Reformation, an event that not only produced signal changes in the history of nations which remained Catholic, but transported beyond the Alps the centre of gravity of European culture.

During the period of which we treat, we behold a rapid social transformation in Italy, an enormous intellectual activity. On all sides old traditions, forms, and institutions were crumbling and disappearing to make way for new. The Scholastic method

yielded the place to philosophy, the principle of authority fell before the advance of free reason and free examination.

Then the study of natural science began; Leon Battista Alberti and Leonardo da Vinci hazarded the first steps in search of the experimental method; commerce and industry advanced; voyages were multiplied, and Christopher Columbus discovered America. The art of printing, invented in Germany, quickly became an Italian trade. Classical learning was everywhere diffused, and the use of the Latin tongue,—now more than ever the universal language of civilized people—placed Italy in close relation with the rest of Europe, as its accepted adviser and mistress of learning. Political science and the art of war were created; chronicles gave way to the political histories of Guicciardini and Machiavelli; ancient culture sprang into new life, and amid many other new forms of literary composition the romance of chivalry came into existence. Brunelleschi created a new architecture, Donatello restored sculpture, Masaccio and a myriad of Tuscan and Umbrian painters prepared the way, by the study of nature, for Raphael and Michel Angelo. The world seemed renewed and rejuvenated by the splendid sun of Italian culture.

But, in the midst of this vivid splendour, strange and inexplicable contradictions were to be found. This rich, industrious, intelligent people, before whom all Europe stood, as it were, in an ecstasy of admiration—this people was rapidly becoming corrupt. Everywhere liberty was disappearing, tyrants were springing up, family ties seemed to be slackened, the domestic hearth was profaned: no man longer trusted to the good faith of Italians. Both politically and morally the nation had become too feeble to resist the onslaught of any foreign power; the first army that passed the Alps traversed the peninsula almost without striking a blow, and was soon followed by others, who devastated and trampled the country with equal impunity.

Accustomed as we are now to hear daily that knowledge and culture constitute the greatness and prove the measure of a nation's strength, we are naturally led to inquire how Italy could become so weak, so corrupt, so decayed, in the midst of her intellectual and artistic pre-eminence!

It is easy to say, that the fault lay with the Italians, who tore each other to pieces instead of uniting for the common defence. But to assert their guilt does not explain it. Was not the Italy of the Middle Ages more divided and yet stronger? were not the civil wars and reprisals of those days even blinder and more sanguinary? Nor is it enough to say that the country had been exhausted by the struggles and dearly-bought grandeur of the

Middle Ages. How can we call a nation exhausted at the very moment when its intelligence and activity are transforming the face of the world? Instead of wearily trying to formulate general judgments, it is better to turn our attention to the observation and description of facts. And the principal fact of the fifteenth century is this: that Italian mediæval institutions having engendered a new state of society and great civil progress, suddenly became not only insufficient, but dangerous. Hence a radical transformation and revolution became unavoidable. And it was precisely at the moment when this social convulsion was going on in Italy, that foreign invaders fell upon the land and checked all internal progress.

The Middle Ages were ignorant of the political organism known to us as the State, which unites and co-ordinates social forces according to precise rules. Instead, society was then divided into Fiefs and Sub-fiefs, into great and little Communes, and the Commune was merely a truss of minor associations, badly bound together. Above this vast and disordered mass stood the Papacy and the Empire, which, although increasing the general confusion by their frequent wars against each other, still gave some rough unity to the civilized world. In the fifteenth century all this was entirely changed. On the one hand, great nations were gradually coming into shape; on the other, the authority of the empire was restricted in Germany, in Italy little more than a memory of the past. The Pontiffs, occupied in constituting an actual and personal temporal power, although still at the head of the universal Church, could no longer pretend to the political dominion of the world, but aspired to be as other sovereigns. In this state of things, the Commune which had formed the past grandeur of Italy, entered on a substantially new phase of existence to which historians have attached too little importance.

The Commune had now obtained its long-desired independence, and had only its own strength to rely upon: in all wars with its neighbours it could no longer hope nor fear the interposition of a superior authority. Hence it became necessary to enlarge its own territory and increase its strength, the more so, since in whatever direction it looked, it beheld great States and military monarchies in process of formation throughout Europe. But owing to the political constitution of the Commune, every extension of territory evoked dangers of so grave a nature as to imperil its very existence. We may really say that a fatal hour had struck in which exactly what was most necessary to it, threatened the gravest danger. The Commune of the Middle Ages was ignorant of representative government, and only understood a government

directed by its free citizens; therefore, it was necessary to restrict these to a very small number, in order to avoid anarchy. For this reason the right of citizenship was a privilege conceded to only a few of those who dwelt within the circuit of the city walls Florence, the most democratic republic in Italy, which in 1494 attained to its most liberal constitution, numbered at that date about 90,000 inhabitants, of whom only 3,200 were citizens proper[1] Even the Ciompi, in their disorderly revolt, had not claimed citizenship for all As to the territory outside the walls, it was considered enough to have abolished servitude; no one contemplated giving it a share in the government. This state of things was based, not only on the statutes, laws, and existing customs, but also in the profound and radical convictions of the most illustrious men. Dante Alighieri, who had taken no small part in the very democratic law of the *Ordinamenti di Giustizia* (Rules of Justice) at the time of Giano della Bella, speaks with regret in his poem of the days when the territory of the Commune only extended a few paces beyond the walls, and the inhabitants of the neighbouring lands of Campi, Figline, and Signa had not begun to mix with those of Florence;

> "Sempre la confusion delle persone
> Principio fu del mal della cittade "[2]

And Petrarch, who dreamed of the ancient empire, and was so enthusiastic for Cola di Rienzo, advised that in reorganizing the Roman republic, its government should be confided to the citizens proper, excluding as foreigners the inhabitants of Latium, and even the Orsini and the Colonna, because these families, although Roman, were, in his opinion, of foreign descent.

Accordingly, whenever the territory of one Commune became enlarged by the submission to it of another, this latter, however mildly governed, found itself completely shut out from political life, and its principal citizens driven forth into exile in foreign parts. The spectacle of a Pisan or a Pistoian in the Councils of the Florentine republic would have been as extraordinary as now-a-days that of a citizen of Paris or Berlin seated on the benches of the Italian Parliament. It was far preferable then to fall under a monarchy, since all subjects of a monarchy enjoyed equal privileges, and every inhabitant of every province was eligible for public offices. In fact, Guicciardini remarked to Machiavelli,

[1] Villari, "The History of G. Savonarola," translated by L. Horner, London. Longmans, 1863.

[2] "Paradiso," xvi 66-8 See also the lines 42-72.

when the latter was sketching the plan of a great Italian republic, that such a form of government would be to the advantage of a single city and the ruin of all others; since a republic never grants the benefit of its freedom "to any but its own proper citizens," whereas monarchy "is more impartial to all."[1] And no terror could equal that experienced by the Italian republics when Venice,—who yet granted greater freedom to her subjects than any other,—turned her attention to the mainland, and aspired to the dominion of the peninsula. They would have preferred, not monarchy alone, but even foreign monarchy, since then they might preserve some local independence, which in those days could not be hoped for in Italy under a republic. Guicciardini considered that Cosmo dei Medici, in aiding Francesco Sforza to become Lord of Milan, saved the liberty of all Italy, which would otherwise have fallen under Venetian domination.[2] And Niccolò Machiavelli, who so frequently sighed for a republic, yet in all his official letters, in all his missions, always speaks of Venice as the chief enemy of Italian freedom.

In this condition of things, with these convictions, it was impossible to hope that the Commune could unite Italy by the formation of a strong republic. One might hope in a confederation or in a monarchy; but the first presupposed a central government different from that of the Communes, in which the city was no longer the state, and was in opposition with the Papacy and the kings of Naples. A monarchy instead, found arrayed against it, on the one hand that ancient love of liberty which had made Italy glorious, and on the other the Popes, who, placed in the centre of the Peninsula, too weak to be able to unite it, but strong enough to prevent others from doing so, from time to time called in foreigners who came to turn all things upside down. For all these reasons the Commune, once the strength and greatness of Italy, may be said to have outlived itself in presence of the novel social problems now arising on all sides, and among the thousand dangers welling up in its own bosom. The Commune had proclaimed liberty and equality. How then could the lower classes, who had fought and conquered feudalism side by side with the wealthy merchant class, be content to be excluded from the government?

Neither could the inhabitants of the territory without the walls,

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," published by Counts Piero and Luigi Guicciardini, in Florence, from 1857 to 1866, in ten vols See in vol i. ("Considerazioni intorno dei Discorsi di Machiavelli") the consideration on chap xii of the "Discourses" Guicciardini at this point styles *kingdom* what we call *monarchy*, and monarchy the union of many Communes in one republic.

[2] "Opere Inedite," vol. iii.; "Storia di Firenze," pp. 8, 9.

who were bound to take arms in the defence of their country, be disposed to tolerate entire exclusion from every public office, from every right of citizenship. And as the territory extended, and new cities were vanquished, the number of the oppressed increased, and passions became inflamed as the disproportion between the small number of the governing and the great number of the governed continually augmented, and all equilibrium became impossible. Had a skilful tyrant then stepped forward, he would have been supported by an infinite multitude of malcontents, to whom he would have appeared in the light of a liberator, or at least in that of an avenger.

And if we turn our eyes from political conditions to social, we shall notice a transformation of equal gravity and equal danger. Looked at from afar, at first sight, the Communes of the Middle Ages appear to be small states in the modern sense of the word; yet in reality they were merely agglomerations of a thousand different associations. Greater guilds (Arti), and lesser guilds, societies and leagues all arranged as so many republics with their assemblies, statutes, tribunals, and ambassadors. These were sometimes stronger than the central government of which they did the work when—as often happens in times of revolution—that government was entirely suspended. We might almost say that the strength of the Commune consisted entirely in the associations that divided and governed it. To these the citizens were so tenaciously attached that often they gave their lives in defence of the republic, merely because it shielded the existence of the association to which they belonged, and prevented it from falling a prey to others.

Hence the Middle Ages have justly been called the ages of associations and castes The great number and variety of these produced an infinite variety of characters and passions unknown to the ancient world; but the modern individual, independence, was not yet created, every individual being then absorbed as it were, in the caste in which and for which he lived. In fact, during a very long period, Italian history seldom records the names of the politicians, soldiers, artists, and poets who were the founders and defenders of the Communes, the creators of Italian institutions, letters and arts. They were Guelphs and Ghibellines, major and minor arts or trades, wandering poets, master masons, always associations or parties, never individuals. Even the colossal figures of popes and emperors derive their importance, less from their personal characteristics and qualities, than from the system to which they belonged, or the institution they represented.

All this rapidly disappeared in the fifteenth century. Dante's

Titanic form stood out from the mediæval background, in the midst of which he still lived, and he boasted with pride of having been his own party. The names of poets, painters, and party leaders were now frequently heard, and individual characters began to be seen in distinct prominence above the crowd. We behold a general transformation of Italian society, which, after having destroyed feudalism and proclaimed equality, found itself compelled to dissolve the associations that had helped to constitute it in its new form. And more than elsewhere this is most clearly seen in Florence where the *Ordinamenti di Giustizia* (1293) abased the nobility and drove them from the government; suppressed certain of the associations; rendered *cliques* impossible; and for the first time placed a Gonfalonier[1] at the head of the Commune. The necessity of beginning to constitute the unity of the modern state was a natural result of the increasing democratic form assumed by the Commune; this was indeed the weighty problem Italy had to solve in the fifteenth century. But the period of change and transition was beset by a thousand dangers; old institutions fell to pieces before new arose, each individual, left to his own guidance, was solely ruled by personal interest and egotism; hence moral corruption became inevitable.

Morality, in the Middle Ages, had its chief basis in the closeness of family bonds and class ties. Of such bonds both law and custom were very jealous guardians: they kept up family inheritances, prevented their removal by marriage to another Commune; and moreover rendered marriage extremely difficult between persons, not only of different Communes, but even of opposing parties in the same city. Hence in the bosom of each caste we find a great community of interests; tenacious affection and great spirit of sacrifice; much jealousy and frequent acts of hatred and revenge against neighbours. Little by little all this vanished, owing to the snapping of old ties by political reform, by increased equality, and by the increased application of the Imperial Roman law rendering women less subject to the domination of their male relatives. And precisely as the Commune had been suddenly left to rely upon its own resources on the cessation of Imperial or Papal supremacy, so the citizen, released from all bonds, found himself in isolated dependence on his own strength. He could no longer feel the old interest in the fate of neighbours who no longer concerned themselves with him; his future, his worldly condition, now solely

[1] I have treated this argument at length in an article entitled "La Republica Florentina al tempo di Dante Alighieri," published in the "Nuova Antologia," vol. xi pp. 443 and following (July, 1869).

depended on his own individual qualities Thus at one and the same time egotism became a power in society and human individuality developed in ever fresh and varying forms. Not only did individual names multiply and ambitious faction-leaders arise on all sides; but the civil wars of the Communes seemed to be converted into personal feuds; cities were divided by the names of their most powerful and turbulent citizens; families split asunder and tore each other to pieces; men no longer recognized the sanctity of any bond. The prejudices, traditions, virtues and vices of the Middle Ages all disappeared to make way for another state of society and other men.

All who take into consideration the double transformation which our Republics have undergone will perceive that while on the one hand they were weakened by the aggrandisement of their territories, and felt increasing need of a central government of greater strength, bearing more equally upon all, on the other hand in proportion to the loosening of the bonds of caste, the number increased of ambitious and audacious individuals whose only object was the acquisition of power. The outbreak of these ambitions at the very time in which the Communes were naturally tending towards monarchial forms, constituted a very serious danger; and thus, as at one time Communes had sprung up all over Italy, so now the hour had struck for the uprising of tyrants.

But whatever his vices, the Italian tyrant had a certain individuality of character, a real historical importance. It was not necessary for him to be of noble or powerful descent, nor even to be the first-born of his house. A tradesman, a bastard, an adventurer of any kind, might command an army, head a revolution, become a tyrant, provided that he had audacity and the talent of success History records many strange tales of this sort, and the Italian novelists who so faithfully depicted the manners of their times, often cut jests about obscure persons who took it into their heads to try and become tyrants; as, for instance of that shoemaker who, as Sacchetti tells us, "wished to possess himself of the lands of Messer Ridolfo da Camerino."[1] The fifteenth century was rightly styled the age of adventurers and bastards. Borso d'Este at Ferrara, Sigismondo Malatesta at Rimini, Francesco Sforza at Milan, Ferdinand of Aragon at Naples, and many other lords and princes were bastards No one was longer bound by any conventions or traditions; everything depended on the personal qualities of those who dared to tempt fortune, on the friends and adherents whom they knew how to gain.

[1] Novella XC edit. Le Monnier, Florence, 1860-61.

Compelled to snatch their power from the midst of a thousand risks and a thousand rivals, they lived in a state of perpetual warfare and licence: no scruples forbade them the use of violence, treason, or bloodshed. For these men, wrong-doing had no limits save those imposed by expediency and personal needs; they looked upon it as a means adapted to reach a desired end. To exceed those limits was regarded not as a crime but as a folly unworthy of a politician, since it brought no advantage. Their conscience ignored remorse, their reason calculated and measured everything; but even when all difficulties were overcome, and success attained, their dangers were by no means at an end. It was necessary to struggle against the fierce discontent of those who, by force of habit, could not bear to live without taking part in the government; against the savage disappointment of those rival aspirants to tyrannical power who had been forestalled or defeated. When a popular rising was put down by force, daggers were secretly pointed from every side, and plots were all the more cruel, since they bore the stamp of personal revenge; were woven by friends, by members of the family: the nearest relations,—often brothers,—were seen contending for the throne with steel and poison. Thus the Italian tyrant was, as it were, condemned to reconquer his kingdom daily; and to this end he considered any and every means justifiable.

In this miserable state of things, personal courage, military valour, and a remorseless conscience were not the only qualities required; it was also needful to have great presence of mind, astute cunning, profound knowledge of men and things, and above all complete control of personal passions. It was necessary to study social, as we study natural phenomena, to have no illusions, to depend upon nothing but reality. It was imperative for every tyrant to thoroughly understand his own kingdom, and the men among whom he lived, in order to be able to dominate them, to discover a fitting form of government, to build up an administrative system, justice, police, public works, everything in short, on the ruins of the past. All substantial power was concentrated in the tyrant's hands, and the unity of the new state came into birth as his personal creation. And with him were born the science and the art of government; but at the same time an opinion was diffused, that afterwards became a very general and fatal error—namely, that laws and institutions are inventions of the statesmen, rather than the natural results of the nation's history and social and civil development. During the Middle Ages, state and history were believed to be the work of

Providence, in which human will and reason had no part; during the Renaissance, on the contrary, everything was thought to be the work of man, who, if foiled in his intents, could blame none but himself and Fortune, which was held to have a large share in the ordering of human destinies. In a country so divided and subdivided as Italy, these vicissitudes were everywhere multiplied and repeated; and it is easy to imagine how much and in how many different ways they contributed to the corruption of the country. Tyrants sprang up among republics, popes, and Neapolitan kings, and all being jealous one of the other, sought the friendship of neighbours and foreigners, in order to weaken and divide their enemies. Thus plots and intrigues increased *ad infinitum*, and at the same time a strange network of political interests was formed which multiplied the international relations of the different states, caused the first idea of political balance to arise in Italy, and endued our diplomacy with marvellous activity, intelligence, and wisdom. Those were days in which every Italian seemed a born diplomatist: the merchant, the man of letters, the captain of adventurers, knew how to address and discourse with kings and emperors, duly observing all conventional forms, and with an admirable display of acumen and penetration. The despatches of our ambassadors were among the chief historical and literary monuments of those times. The Venetians stood in the first rank for practical good sense and observation of facts, the Florentines for elegance of style and subtle perception of character, but they had worthy rivals in the ambassadors of other states Thus, the art of speaking and writing became a formidable weapon, and one that was highly prized by Italians.

It was then that adventurers, immovable by threats, prayers, or pity, were seen to yield to the verses of a learned man. Lorenzo dei Medici went to Naples, and by fo[illegible] of argument persuaded Ferrante d'Aragona to put an end to the war and conclude an alliance with him. Alfonso the Magnanimous, a prisoner of Filippo Maria Visconti, and whom all believed dead, was instead honourably liberated because he had the skill to convince that gloomy and cruel tyrant that it would better serve his turn to have the Aragonese at Naples than the followers of Anjou, winding up his argument by saying: "Would'st thou rather satisfy thy appetite than secure thee thy State?"[1] In a revolution at Prato, got up by Bernardo Nardi, this leader, according to Machiavelli, had already thrown the halter round

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," vol. xi. lib. v. p. 11. We generally quote the works of this author from the edition of 1813.

the neck of the Florentine Podestà when the latter's fine reasoning persuaded him to spare his life; and thus nothing more went well with him.[1] Such facts may sometimes be exaggerations or even wholly fictitious; but seeing them so constantly repeated and believed, proves what were the ideas and temper of these men.

Therefore it is not astonishing if even tyrants loved study and ardently encouraged art, literature, and culture in every shape. And they did this, not merely from a keen perception of the art of governing or as a means for turning the people's attention from politics; it was likewise a necessity of their condition, a true and real intellectual need. A well-written diplomatic note, a skilful discourse, could resolve the gravest political questions. To what did the Italian tyrant owe his dominions, if not to his own intelligence? How could he be indifferent to the arts which educated it and increased his importance? His happiest hours of rest from state affairs were passed among books, literati, and artists. The museum and the library were to him that which the stable and the cellar were to many feudal lords of the north; everything that could cultivate or refine the mind was a necessary element of his life: in his palace the perfect courtier was formed, the modern gentleman came into existence.

There was, however, a strange contradiction in the men of that period, a contradiction that often appears to us an insoluble enigma. We can forgive the savage passions and crimes of the Middle Ages, or can at all events understand them, but to behold men who speak and think like ourselves, men who experience genuine delight before a Madonna by Fra Angelico or Luca della Robbia, before the aerial curves of Alberti's and Brunelleschi's architecture, men who show disgust at a coarse attitude, at a gesture that is not of the most finished elegance; to behold these men abandon themselves to the most atrocious crimes, the most obscene vices; to behold them using poison to dismiss from the world some dangerous rival or relative: this it is that we cannot comprehend. It was a transitional period in which it may be said that the passions and characteristics of two different ages had been grafted one upon the other, in order to form before our eyes a mysterious sphinx which excites our wonder and almost our fear. But we should be too severe towards it were we to forget that one age may not be judged by the creeds and rules of another.

In whatever direction we turn our eyes, we behold the same facts reproduced under different forms. The military forces of

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," lib. vii. p. 184.

the fifteenth century were no longer those of the Middle Ages, and, though widely different from, gave birth to the modern army. In the times of the Communes, wars were carried on by lightly armed foot-soldiers. Every spring the merchant, the artizan, buckled on their breastplates, marched outside the walls to the attack of baronial castles and neighbouring lands, and then went quietly back to their workshops. Very little importance was given to cavalry, which, for the most part, consisted of nobles. But as time went on all this entirely changed. Wars became much more complicated, and an army's main strength consisted in the heavy cavalry, or, as the phrase went, in the men-at-arms. Each one of these was followed by two or three horsemen, bearing the heavy armour, which he and his charger only donned in the hour of action, for its weight was so terrible, that if they fell to the ground with it, they could not rise again without help. And this species of iron-clad tower wielded a lance of enormous length, with which he could overthrow a foot-soldier before the latter could reach him with halberd or sword. One squadron of this cavalry was always enough to rout an army of infantry, until the invention of gunpowder and improvement of firearms again transformed the art of war The Florentines learnt this to their cost, when on the field of Montaperti (1260) a handful of German cavalry, joined to the Ghibelline exiles, put to rout the strongest infantry force ever collected in Tuscany. And at Campaldino (1289) the Tuscan foot had to throw themselves under the horses of the men-at-arms and rip them up before they could win the battle. This new method of fighting had a fatal result for our republics It required long training and continual practice to form a good man-at-arms; how could artizans and merchants find time for that? There were no standing armies in those days, and the aristocracy, which alone could have been trained to live under arms, had been destroyed in the Italian Communes What then was to be done? Recourse was had to foreigners, and the use of mercenary troops began.

In other countries the aristocracy preserved its power; and accordingly there were plenty of men who made fighting their trade. These were always nobles with a following of vassals. Every time that the Emperor descended upon Italy, every time that the party of Anjou resumed their continual enterprises upon Naples, or the Spaniards made some new raid, there remained behind at the end of the campaign a number of soldiers and disbanded troops, who, eager of adventure, sought and took service under the different lords and Republics The first arrivals always attracted others, for bountiful pay was given, and foreigners found us easy

prey by reason of our lack of men-at-arms. Bands of adventurers began to be formed who sold their swords to the highest bidder. These soon became insolent bullies, dictating laws to friends and enemies alike But little by little the Italians began to enrol themselves under these banners, and fascinated by the new way of life, multiplied so rapidly and succeeded so well that they soon set about forming native companies. Certainly there was no lack of material among us for captains and soldiers. What better career for party leaders who had been defeated in their ambitious design by still more ambitious rivals? They hurried to join the first band of adventurers they could find, and trained themselves to arms in order to command later a squadron or company of their own. By serving under a noted leader, or forming a band, the pettiest tyrants were enabled to defend and aggrandize their own State. When one Republic was conquered and subdued by another, the citizens who had ruled and then unsuccessfully defended it, sometimes emigrated *en masse* to wander about as adventurers, and sought in warfare the liberty they had lost at home. Thus did the Pisans when their Republic fell into the hands of the Florentines, and thus did many others. Country districts gave a good number of soldiers, and certain provinces like Romagna, the Marshes, and Umbria—where anarchy was so great that men seemed to live by rapine, vengeance, and brigandage—were a nursery and mart of mercenary leaders and soldiers.

These bands can neither be called a mediæval nor a modern institution. Peculiar to a transitional period, they had a temporary character, being composed of fragments of all the recently destroyed old institutions, and were altogether disastrous; but nevertheless they were imbued with the spirit of the new Italian Renaissance, and owed their importance to it. Our Italian companies soon began to gain the upper hand over the foreign—especially after Alberico da Barbiano had created his new art of war—and assumed a different form and character. For the foreign bands were commanded by a council of leaders, each one of whom had great authority over his own men, who were generally, at least in part, his private vassals, and were ready to follow him and separate from the others whenever required. In Italy, on the contrary, the importance and strength of the band depended entirely on the valour and military genius of the man who commanded and almost personified it. The soldiers obeyed the supreme will of their head, without, however, being bound to him by any personal fealty or submission, and were ready to forsake him in favour of a more famous leader or higher pay. War became the work of a

directing mind; the army was held together by the name and courage of its commander; every battle was, as it were, his own military creation.

Thus was formed the school of Alberico da Barbiano, to be speedily followed by those of Braccio da Montone, the Sforza, the Piccinini, and many more, each learning his trade in another's ranks. The Italian captain created the science and art of war, as the prince created the science and art of government. Both in one and the other were the highest manifestations of talent and individuality; in both the one and the other the moral strength was lacking which alone can give true stability to the works of man. The individual was nowhere more free from the conventional ties of the Middle Ages than in these bands; his fame and power alike depended solely on his own courage, his own genius.

Muzio Attendolo Sforza, one of the most terrible captains of his time, and who became High Constable of the Kingdom of Naples, had originally been a field-labourer, and began his military career as a stable-boy. His natural son, Francesco, was Duke of Milan. Carmagnola, commander-in-chief of the Venetian's most formidable armies, and lord of many estates, began life as a herdsman. Niccolò Piccinini, before becoming a famous captain, was a member of the guild of butchers in Perugia. Nor did these things cause the smallest surprise to any one. The free company was an open field to individual activity; strength, luck, and talent alone commanded in it; there were no traditional nor moral trammels of any sort. The Free Companies made war without serving any principle or any fatherland, transferring their aid from friends to enemies for higher pay or finer promises. As for military honour, maintenance of oaths, fidelity to his own banner, all such things were unknown to the free captain, who would have deemed it puerile and ridiculous to allow such obstacles to stop him on the road to fortune and power,—the sole objects of his life.

In many respects his career and character resembled those of the Italian tyrant. At the head of a complicated and difficult administration, he had daily to collect new soldiers, in order to fill vacancies in his ranks, caused more frequently by desertion than by the sword of the enemy, and he had daily to find the money for paying his men in peace and war. He was in continual relations with the Italian States, seeking employment and gaining money by threats or promises, and corresponding with those who made the highest bids to carry him off from their adversary. In fact, he resembled the lord of some city that

moved from place to place, a circumstance that did not make it easier to govern; even as the tyrant, he lived in perpetual danger, and more so when at peace than at war. He was constantly threatened by the jealousies of the other leaders of bands or companies; by the ambition of his subordinates, who often plotted conspiracies against him; also by fear of being left without an engagement, and having to disband his army for want of funds. Having no certainty of his good faith, the States he served always held him in suspicion, and from doubts passed readily to deeds, as was seen by the fate of Carmagnola and Paolo Vitelli, suddenly seized and beheaded, the one by the Venetians, the other by the Florentines, at the head of whose armies they fought. It was singular, too, to see these men—generally of low origin and devoid of culture—surrounded in their camps by ambassadors, poets, and learned men, who read to them Livy and Cicero, and original verses, in which they were compared to Scipio and Hannibal, to Cæsar and Alexander. When, as very often happened, they conquered some territory on their own account, or received it in return for their services, they were really captains and princes at the same time.

Thus, then, war became a kind of diplomatic and commercial operation for the Italian States; he was the conqueror who could find most money, procure most friends, and best flatter and reward the celebrated captains whose fidelity was only to be kept alive by fresh money and fresh hopes. But soon the true military spirit began to perish among these soldiers, who fought to-day against their comrades of yesterday, with whom they might be again united in the next four-and-twenty hours. Their object was no longer victory, but spoil. Later the Free Companies disappeared altogether, to be replaced by the standing armies for whom they had prepared the way; but they left behind them a load of heavy calamities, during which Italians gave proof of much talent and great courage; founded the new art of war; manifested an infinite variety of aptitudes, qualities, and military characteristics; and yet became continually weaker, continually more corrupt.

In literature we see more clearly than elsewhere the general transformation that took place at this time. Our historians in general deplore, without seeming to understand why the Italians, after having created a splendid national literature by the "Divina Commedia," the "Decamerone," and the "Canzoniere,"[1] should have gone astray from the glorious path, by turning to the imitation of ancient writers, almost despising their own tongue,

[1] The Sonnets of Petrarch.

and upholding the use of Latin But on reading the works of Dante and Petrarch and Boccaccio, it is easy to perceive that these authors opened the path trodden by the fifteenth century. In the "Divina Commedia" antiquity holds throughout a post of honour, and is almost sanctified by a boundless admiration; in the "Decameron" Latin periods already transform and transplace Italian periods; Petrarch is undoubtedly the first of the men of learning.

Whoever compares Italian writers of the thirteenth century with those appearing at the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries, will speedily see that the time spent upon the classics during that interval had not been thrown away. In fact, in reading, I will not say the "Fioretti di San Francesco" and the "Vite" of Cavalca, but the "Monarchia" and the "Convito" of Dante, and even the "Divina Commedia," we must, as it were, transport ourselves into another world; the author frequently reasons in the old scholastic style; neither observes nor sees the world as we see it. If, on the other hand, we look at the works of Guicciardini, Machiavelli, and their contemporaries, we find men who, even with different opinions, think and reason like ourselves. The scholastic systems, mysticism, and allegories of the Middle Ages have so entirely disappeared that no memory of them seems any longer to exist. We are on this earth, in the midst of reality, with men who no longer look upon the world through a fantastic veil of mystic illusion, but with their own eyes, their own reason, unenslaved by any authority. And thus the question arises: in what way did the scholars of the fifteenth century contrive to discover a new world by means of classical studies, almost as Columbus discovered America in seeking a fresh passage to the Indies?

The Middle Ages, in order to re-awaken a new spiritual life in mankind, had despised earthly concerns and the needs of society, had subjected philosophy to theology, the State to the Church. The real was only considered useful as a symbol or allegory to express the ideal, the earthly city merely a preparation for the heavenly; there was a reaction against all that had been the essence of Paganism, the inspiration of ancient art. Thus human reason remained shut up in scholastic syllogisms, in the clouds of mysticism, in the fantastic and complicated creations of the romances of chivalry and minstrelsy of Provence. But when with a sudden rush of new inspiration, Italian poetry and prose sprang up to describe the real passions and affections of mankind, sentence of death was passed on the world of the Middle Ages.[1]

[1] My excellent colleague and friend, Professor A. Bartoli, in one of his

The old vague and fantastic forms could not stand against these new and precise analyses, this splendid imagery, this style and language, through which thought shines as through the purest crystal. This literature, however, in giving a new direction to the human mind, soon gave birth to new needs, all of which it could not satisfy. It is true that a poetic language was now in existence, that incomparable forms had been found for the tale, the sonnet, the song, and the poem : but the new philosophical, epistolary, oratorical, and historical styles were still unborn. For this reason the writer of the thirteenth century very often resembled a man who, in spite of having strong limbs, travels a road so narrow and so beset with obstacles, that he cannot walk without help ; in order to keep his feet he is obliged from time to time to support himself on scholastic crutches. Who can help perceiving that Dante himself had still one foot in the Middle Ages, when in his "Monarchia" we find him disputing whether the Pope should be compared to the sun, the Emperor to the moon : whether the fact of Samuel deposing Saul, and the offerings of the Magi to the infant Saviour, can prove the dependency of the Empire on the Church ? In reading the "Cronaca" of Giovanni Villani, we find not merely a writer of much graphic power, but a most acute observer, whom nothing escapes, a man practised in the world and its affairs. He sees and notes everything ; battles, revolutions both political and social, forms of government, new buildings, pictures and literary works, the industry, commerce, taxes, expenditure, and revenues of the republic ; for he sees that human society is composed of all these things, and that from them is derived the power and prosperity of States Yet never once does he hit upon the logical unity of historic narration that connects all these elements together, and makes the connecting bond visible ; his work never rises above the modest limits of a chronicle. And whenever the writer of the thirteenth century treats of philosophy or politics, whenever he tries to compose an oration or a letter, he seems condemned to resume the fetters he has snapped.

It was necessary, therefore, to enlarge the limits of style ; to spread the language ; to render it more universal, more flexible ; to find out new literary forms which were still wanting, and

"Memorie" among the "Pubblicazioni della Sezione di Filosofia e Filologia dell' Instituto Superiore" (Florence, Le Monnier and Co , 1875, vol i. p. 351 following), has recently shown that the study of nature, as well as of the classics, had followers throughout the Middle Ages, and hence that the realism of the Renaissance had a more ancient origin than is generally believed. We, however, only treat of this historical period after it had already assumed a definite and determined form ; we do not explore its more remote origin.

had now become necessary. And this want began to be felt at the very moment when the young and vigorous growth of the national strength had been arrested by the political and social complications which we have already noted. Thus the spring of originality suddenly failed which had already created our literature, and which alone could complete it, by leading it towards the new forms it sought But as these forms are not changeable at pleasure, but determined by the laws of nature and of thought, and were first discovered by the Greeks and the Romans, in whose writings they still maintain all the vigour, splendour, and originality which works of art possess only at the moment of their first creation, a return towards the past presented itself as a natural means of progress, and the close relation of Italian culture to Latin made it seem like a new draught from the primal source, a return to the old national grandeur. The Greeks and the Latins offered to Italy a literature inspired by nature and reality, guided by reason alone, neither subject to any authority, nor veiled in the clouds of allegory or of mysticism; to imitate this literature, then, was to break the last fetters of the Middle Ages Thus in all things the impulse was towards the ancient world. It was there that painting and sculpture found perfected study of the human form and faultlessness of design; it was there that architecture discovered a more solid mode of construction, and one better adapted to the various needs of social life; it was there that the man of letters found the mastery of style of which he was in search, and the philosopher, independence of reason and observation of nature; it was there, in the Roman world, that the politician beheld that State unity which not only science, but society itself, was then seeking as its necessary aim.

Imitation of the antique became a species of mania that seized upon all men; tyrants sought to copy Cæsar and Augustus, republicans Brutus, free captains Scipio and Hannibal, philosophers Aristotle and Plato, men of letters Virgil and Cicero, even the names of persons and places were changed for Greek and Latin ones

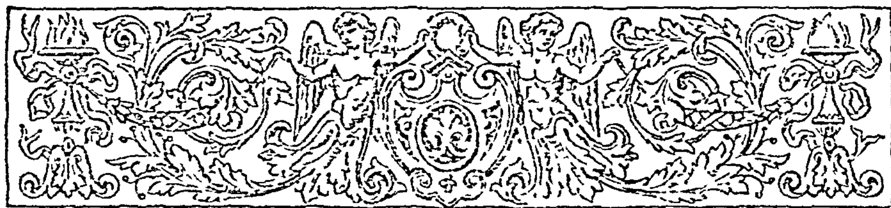
Yet the Middle Ages had certainly not ignored all ancient writers, and held some of them in almost religious respect But mediæval classic learning was, with slight exception, very different from that which now arose. It had been restricted to a small number of the more recent Latin writers, who, having lived under the Empire which still seemed to dominate the world, and was deemed immutable and immortal, were less removed from Christian ideas, were read almost as contemporary authors;

and whose works were twisted and bent to support the tenets of Christianity. Virgil prophesied the coming of Christ; Cicero's ethics must be identical with those of the Gospels; and Aristotle, known only in Latin translations and garbled by his commentators, was made to maintain the immortality and spirituality of the soul in which he had no belief. The tastes and desires of the fifteenth century were widely different. There was no desire now to transform the Pagan into the Christian world; this century wished to recur to the former and be thus led back from the city of God to that of men, from heaven to earth. Therefore a knowledge of the more recent classic writers was no longer sufficient; it was necessary to read all and the more ancient with most ardour, since they demanded a greater mental effort, and rendered necessary a longer ideal journey. For that reason ancient manuscripts were eagerly hunted for and commented upon, ancient monuments discussed with a feverish activity unexampled in history. It seemed as though the Italians wished not only to imitate the ancient world, but to raise it from the tomb and bring it to life again, since they felt that in it they learnt to know themselves, and entered, as it were, into a second life; it was a true and genuine renaissance. Nor did they perceive that their imitations and reproductions were animated by a new spirit that went on gradually developing, at first in an invisible and hidden way, till at last it burst suddenly from its chrysalis, and shone forth in a national and modern shape. Thus it was by study of the ancients that the Italians were enabled to free themselves and Europe from the fetters of the Middle Ages, and instead of interrupting, they continued and completed in a different form the work begun by the writers of the thirteenth century.

The new literary and artistic productions were not, however, the result of a young and vigorous inspiration, born of a young and vigorous society,—such as that in which Dante lived,—full of ardour and faith, abounding in strong characters and stern passions. Produced at a period in which a feverish activity of the mind still continued, but the nobler aspirations of the human heart had ceased to exist, they showed the consequences of this state of things. Marvellous success is attained in all branches in which visible nature and the outer study of man and man's actions have the principal part. The fine arts, still plastic in their nature, lost the epic grandeur of Giotto and Orcagna, the religious inspiration of the old Christian cathedrals; and assimilating classical forms—although unconsciously altering them—they were inspired by Grecian genius to imitate nature and

reproduce it in new and spontaneous creations, surrounded by an ethereal veil, with colours of unequalled brilliancy and freshness It was an art that, through the ingrafting of Christian upon Pagan forms, acquired new spontaneousness and purity; shed immortal glory on its age and nation, and was the most complete manifestation of the Renaissance from which it was derived and to which it communicated its own special character The poetry of this period was also unrivalled in its descriptions and reproductions of the real which stood out clear and well defined, even amidst the most fantastic creations of the chivalric and tragi-comic poem Political science, treating of human actions in their objective and exterior value, in their practical consequences, almost apart from the moral character they acquire in the human conscience, and the intentions by which they are inspired, not only flourished, but was the most original creation of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Men worked with irresistible energy; they sought and found every possible form of literature, they acquired immense truth and facility in prose and poetry; they created the language and style of oratory, diplomacy, history, and philosophy, but the religious sentiment disappeared, moral sensibility was weakened, and the cultivation of form often increased to the disadvantage of substance, a defect which has endured for centuries in Italian literature, almost as a witness of the conditions under which it took its definite form In considering this prodigious intellectual activity, that reappeared with increasing splendour in a thousand different shapes, yet always accompanied by moral decay, the historian of those times is struck with terrified amazement, recognizing the presence of a mysterious contradiction, prophetic of future ills When the evil secretly corroding this nation came to the surface, a tremendous catastrophe was inevitable; and its continual advance side by side with so much intellectual progress, is precisely the history of the Renaissance For the better comprehension of this, it is needful to examine matters still more closely.



II.

THE PRINCIPAL ITALIAN STATES.

1. *Milan.*



AT Milan, for the first time, we find an Italian Commune transformed, through tyranny, into a modern State. Having become the centre of a vast agglomeration of republics and lordships, now united and now separated by different interests and jealousies, there arose in its midst the power of the Visconti, who were divided among themselves by private and bloody dissensions. ' In 1378, Bernabò Visconti was in conflict with his nephew Giovan Galeazzo, better known by his title of Count of Virtù. Both equally ambitious and equally wicked, the first was a blind slave to his passions, and in consequence fell a victim to his nephew, who knew how to direct his own towards a given end. The latter succeeded in 1378 in throwing him and his children into a dungeon, which they never left alive; and these obstacles removed, he began vigorously to re-organize the State and put down anarchy.

Beset by a thousand enemies, Giovan Galeazzo had no army, and was even deficient in military courage; but he joined to great cunning a profound knowledge of mankind, and real political genius Shut up in his castle of Pavia, he took into his service the first captains in Italy, and the most renowned diplomatists, weaving, with the help of the latter, the threads of his dark policy all over the Peninsula, which he quickly filled with intrigues and wars; he, the while, directing military operations in the solitude of his cabinet.

Thanks to his sureness of eye and promptness of will, he succeeded in making a complete hecatomb of the petty tyrants of Lombardy, allying himself with one to ruin another, and finally turning against those who had helped him, and assuming posses-

sion of their States. Thus he formed the Duchy of Milan, of which he received the investiture from the Emperor. He then extended his dominions to Genoa, Bologna, and Tuscany, and hoped to place the crown of Italy upon his head, after defeating Florence, which he had already worn out by continual wars. But on the 3rd of December, 1402, death put an end to all his projects It is marvellous to observe how, in the privacy of his cabinet, he undertook many skilfully conducted wars, and brought them to a successful close, while at the same time engaged in creating and ordering a new State. Although the chief object of his government was the imposition of taxes to pay for his incessant warfare, justice was generally well administered, the finances were well regulated, and general prosperity was on the increase. The free assemblies were converted into councils of administration and police, and every city had a *Potestà*, elected, no longer by the people, but by the Duke; the Commune was no longer a State, but, as in modern times, an organ of administration; a *collegio*, or council of men of authority in the capital, already shadowed forth the modern cabinet. Surrounded by *literati* and artists—initiator of great public works, among which are the two noblest monuments in Lombardy—the Cathedral of Milan and the Certosa of Pavia, where, too, he gave new life and renown to the university — Gian Galeazzo Visconti is the first of modern princes. Under his rule mediæval institutions entirely disappeared, and the unity of the new State was established. This, however, being an altogether personal creation, with no object beyond the individual interest of the prince, after his death the State quickly lapsed into anarchy, torn by the contending ambitions of mercenary leaders.

Later, Filippo Maria, son of Giovan Galeazzo, took in hand the reins of government, and followed in his father's footsteps He had been compelled to share the St[illegible]h his brother Giovanni Maria, a ferocious man, who threw [illegible] victims to be torn to pieces by the large pack of dogs he kep[illegible] that purpose; but the daggers of conspirators came to Filippo's aid, and on the 12th of May, 1412, Giovanni was stabbed in a church. Filippo was a degenerate copy of his father, cunning, false, traitorous, and cruel; he did not possess Giovan Galeazzo's political faculty, but he united perfect control over his passions to a wide knowledge of mankind. Timid even to cowardice, he had the strangest passion for rushing into continual and dangerous wars. These, however, he conducted by means of the first captains in Italy, selected with admirable discrimination, and whom he contrived to make each in turn suspicious of the other, in order to secure his

own safety from their ambition. Surrounded by spies, shut up in his castle of Milan, which he never left, he duped everybody, always finding fresh opportunities of deceit; he lived in perpetual conflict with other States, yet always escaped defeat by craft. The Florentines were routed by him at Zagonara in 1424; by the Venetians, whom he always opposed, he was defeated over and over again; but after making peace—not always on honourable terms—he quickly collected more money and again declared war. He even threw himself into the Neapolitan struggle between the Angevins and the Aragonese, and succeeded in capturing Alphonso of Aragon, whom he afterwards liberated, in order to deprive the Angevins of complete victory. In the midst of the great tumult of events and enemies that he had provoked, he reconquered and reorganized the paternal State, holding it securely by force of his diabolical cunning down to the day of his death in 1447.

Having no legitimate heirs, and only one natural daughter, Bianca, had made his condition all the more perilous, since there were many who aspired to succeed him. Among them was one, recognized throughout Italy as the first captain of his time, to whose aid Visconti was continually obliged to recur, as he found himself perpetually at his mercy. Francesco Sforza was a lion who knew how to play the fox, and Filippo Maria was a fox who liked to don the lion's skin. They went on for many years, each lying in wait for the other, and each thoroughly aware of the other's secret designs. Often and often Sforza was on the brink of total ruin, ensnared in the plots of Visconti, who then came to his assistance. In 1441 Filippo gave him his daughter in marriage, thus nourishing his most ambitious hopes, the better to make use of him in war, yet always weaving fresh plots against him, from which, on his side, Sforza as often escaped without ever yielding to any wish for revenge. And in this way, when, after a reign of nearly fifty years, Visconti died a natural death, Sforza had power enough to succeed in his long meditated design.

And now one dynasty is replaced by another, and the Italian prince is presented to us under a totally different aspect. The Visconti had been a great family, and by cunning, daring, and political genius, had become masters of the Duchy they had built up. The Sforza, on the contrary, were new men, of obscure origin, and fought their way with the sword. Muzio Attendolo, the father of Francesco Sforza, was born of a Romagnol family, living a life of semi-brigandage and hereditary *vendette* in Cotignola. It is said that the kitchen of their house looked like an arsenal: among dishes and smoky saucepans hung breastplates,

swords, and daggers, which the family, men, women, and children, all used with equal courage While yet a mere lad, Muzio was carried off by a band of adventurers, and being shortly afterwards joined by his own people, he took the command of his company, and was known by the name of Sforza, which was given to him in the field Possessed of indomitable courage, strength, and energy, he was less a general than a soldier who joined in the *mêlée* and killed his enemies with his own hands. Of a very impetuous disposition, some of his actions were those of a brigand, as for instance when he ran his sword through Ottobuono III of Parma, while parleying with the Marquis of Este. Yet by perpetually transferring his services from one master to another, carrying disorder and devastation wherever he went, he succeeded in becoming lord of many lands, which he kept for himself and his faithful followers It was in the kingdom of Naples, while in the pay of the capricious queen, Joanna II., that he passed through his chief and strangest vicissitudes: first general, then prisoner, now High Constable of the kingdom, then once more in prison, he was on the point of perishing miserably, when at Tricarico his sister Margherita, sword in hand, and a helmet on her head, so thoroughly frightened the royal messengers that she obtained her brother's release. He was again given the command of the royal forces, and afterwards died near Aquila, drowned in the Pescara river, while swimming across it to urge his men to follow him on to a victory that seemed already assured. And thus ended a life no less stormy than the sea in which his body found a grave (1424).

Francesco, his natural son, a youth of twenty-three years, instantly took command of his father's troops, and led them on from victory to victory, giving proof of true military genius and great political acumen. Always master of himself, he never gave way to his passions, excepting when it was expedient to do so He served the Visconti against the Venetians, the Venetians against the Visconti; he first attacked the Pope, depriving him of Romagna, and giving his orders, *invitis Petro et Paulo*, and then defended him Through his military genius he became the man whom all desired to have in their service, for it seemed as though no power in Italy could be victorious without him, although captains such as the Piccinini and Carmagnola were then flourishing. But amidst all these vicissitudes he kept his eye upon one fixed point, and on the death of Filippo Maria, it was quickly seen how a free captain could change into a statesman

A Republic had been proclaimed in Milan; its subject cities had thrown off the yoke; Venice was threatening, and internal

dissensions had broken out. He offered the aid of his sword to the tottering city which believed it had found in him an anchor of safety, and then gradually found itself besieged by its own captain, who, on the 25th of March, 1430, made his triumphal entry, with an already arranged court. His first act was to ask the people whether, to defend themselves against the Venetians, they would prefer to rebuild the fortress of Porta Giovio, or maintain a permanent army within the walls. They voted for the fortress, which soon became the strongest bulwark of tyranny against the people. Friends and enemies alike, if formidable, were quickly imprisoned, deprived of everything they possessed, and even put to death without hesitation. All the State territories were reconquered, rebellion was suppressed, order, administration, and common justice were re-established with marvellous rapidity. And in all these acts Sforza proceeded with the calmness of a man who knows his own strength, and desires to gain a reputation for impartiality and justice. Yet, whenever it seemed opportune, no one knew better than he how to get rid of friends and enemies with perfidious cruelty.

The Revolt of Piacenza was suffocated in the blood of his faithful captain, Brandolini. When the slaughter had reached its climax, and everything was pacified, Brandolini was thrown into prison, to the general amazement, as a suspected person, and was afterwards found with his throat cut and a blunted and bloody sword by his side. The populace said that the Duke had thus punished his captain's excessive cruelty; the keener witted declared that the Duke, after having used him to the utmost, had got rid of a useless instrument, so that on the latter alone the odium of the enormous bloodshed might fall. Born and reared in war, the Duke now wished to be a man of peace, and aimed only at the consolidation of his own State within its natural boundaries, totally abandoning the ambitious and perilous designs of the Visconti. And when, after an almost universal, but not very important war, the Italian potentates concluded a general peace in 1454, Sforza contrived to make himself implicitly recognized by all, and retained the territories of Bergamo, Ghiara d'Adda, and Brescia. Noted as one of the most audacious and turbulent free captains, he was in a position to know what heavy calamities they bring upon orderly and pacific States; hence he was one of those who chiefly contributed, if not to put them down, at least to deprive them of much of their past importance, as indeed was already happening by the natural force of events. Jacopo Piccinini was now the sole survivor of the old school of mercenary leaders, and truly one who had only to raise his

standard to assemble a formidable army. He was living quietly in Milan, when he was seized by a desire to visit his lands in the kingdom of Naples, and was much encouraged in this by the Duke, although every one knew how sorely he was hated by Ferrante d'Aragona. No sooner did he reach Naples than he was received with open arms by the king, who took him to see the palace, and then threw him into a dungeon, where he soon died Sforza protested loudly against this breach of faith; but all men believed that by agreement with the king, he had thus freed himself of an inconvenient neighbour.

Francesco Sforza was, as a modern historian[1] happily expresses it, a man after the heart of the fifteenth century. A great captain and an acute politician, he knew how to play both the lion and the fox; when bloodshed was necessary, he did not shrink from it, but at other times he sought to distribute impartial justice, and even showed himself capable of generosity and pity. He founded a dynasty, conquered a dominion, which he left secure and well governed, and constructed great public works, such as the Martesana Canal and the chief hospital of Milan. Surrounded by Greek exiles and Italian scholars, the Court of the whilom adventurer speedily became one of the most splendid in all Italy, and his daughter Ippolita was renowned for her Latin discourses, which were universally extolled. The famous Cicco (Francesco) Simonetta, a most learned Calabrian, and a man of proved fidelity, was the Duke's secretary, his brother Giovanni was his historian, and Francesco Filelfo, the courtier poet, sang his praises in the "Sforziade" Thus, celebrated in prose and verse as the just, the great, the magnanimous, Francesco Sforza breathed his last on the 8th of March, 1466. He had attempted all things, succeeded in all things, therefore his contemporaries believed him the greatest man of the age. But of what nature was the State that he had actually constituted? A society whose every element of strength was rapidly exhausted; a people whom its sovereign believed he could mould into any form he would, as if they were plastic material in the hands of a new artist, whose sole merit consists in carrying out the ends he proposes, whatever those ends may be Neither the Visconti nor Sforza ever conceived any truly great or fertile political idea, for they never identified themselves with the people, but only made it an instrument of

[1] Burckhardt, "Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien:" Basle, 1860 Since then a second edition of this important work, with several changes and additions, has appeared, and now a very faithful Italian translation has been published by Professor D. Valbusa, with many original additions and corrections by the author, "La Civiltà del secolo del rinascimento in Italia cc." Florence, Sansoni, 1876.

their own interests. They were masters in the art of governing, but they never succeeded in founding a true government, for by their own tyranny they had destroyed its essential elements. The fatal consequences of their policy, which was too truly the Italian policy of the fifteenth century, were to be speedily made apparent throughout the Peninsula, just as on the Duke's death they began to be manifested in Milan.

Sforza's dissolute and cruel son, Galeazzo Maria, had so depraved a disposition that he was even accused of having poisoned his own mother.[1] In the belief that all was lawful and possible for a prince, he, in an age that might almost be called civilized, caused several of his subjects to be buried alive, others, on the most frivolous pretexts, he condemned to death amid lingering tortures, and only spared those who could redeem their lives with gold. He dissipated treasures in his festivals at Milan, and his cavalcades all through Italy, spreading corruption wherever he went. Not content with seducing the daughters of the noblest Milanese houses, he himself exposed them to public contempt. Neither public institutions nor popular indignation imposed a check upon his unbridled licence, for the people no longer existed, and all institutions had become mere engines of tyranny.

At last an end was put to this state of things by one of the most singular and noteworthy of the many conspiracies for which this age was remarkable.

Girolamo Olgiati and Giannandrea Lampugnani, pupils of Niccola Montano, who had trained them by classical studies to love, liberty, hate, and tyranny, being injured by the Duke, resolved on revenge, and found in Carlo Visconti a third companion moved by the same motives. They strengthened their zeal for the enterprise by the study of Sallust and Tacitus, they practised stabbing with the sheaths of daggers, and, having arranged everything for the 26th of December, 1476, Olgiati went to the church of St. Ambrose, threw himself at the Saint's feet, and prayed for success. On the morning of the chosen day the three conspirators attend divine service in the church of St. Stephen, and recited a Latin prayer expressly composed by Visconti: "If thou lovest justice and hatest iniquity," they besought the Saint, "fashion our magnanimous enterprise, and be not wrathful if we must presently stain thy altars with blood, in order to free the world of a monster." The Duke was killed, but Visconti and Lampugnani fell victims to the fury of the populace, who wished to revenge their own executioner. Olgiati sought safety in flight, but was soon

captured and condemned to a cruel death When shattered by torture, he called to his aid the shades of the Romans, and commended his soul to the Virgin Mary. Being urged to repent, he declared that had he to die ten times over amid those tortures, ten times would he cheerfully consecrate his blood to so heroic a deed. Up to his last moments he continued to compose Latin epigrams, congratulating himself when they were neatly turned; and as the headsman drew near, his last words were:—"*Collige te, Hieronyme, stabit vetus memoria facti Mors acerba fama perpetua*"[1] Here we see that while all political feeling was extinguished in the people, there were a few individuals in whom Christian and profane sentiments, love of liberty, and ferocious personal hatred, heroic resignation and unquenchable thirst for blood, vengeance, and glory, were all mingled in the strangest way Ruins of old systems and remains of various civilizations were confused together in the Italian mind, while the germ was budding of a new individual and social form, which had as yet no well-defined outline. Later, Lodovico il Moro, the late Duke's brother, an ambitious, timid, restless man, usurped his nephew Galeazzo's dominions, and, to keep up his unjustly acquired power, threw all Italy into confusion, as we shall have occasion to notice, when, after examining the condition of the different States, we give a general glance at the whole Peninsula.

2 *Florence.*

The history of Florence shows us a condition of things widely different from that of Milan. At first sight it seems as though we were plunged in a huge chaos of confused events of which we can understand neither the reason nor the aim But on closer examination we find a clue, and can perceive how the Florentine Republic, amid an infinite series of revolutionary changes, and every political institution known to the Middle Ages, steadily aimed at the triumph of the democracy, the total destruction of feudalism, and achieved these objects by means of Giano della Bella's *Ordinamenti della Giustizia* in the year 1493. From that date Florence became exclusively a city of traders, was no longer divided between nobles and burghers,

[1] Machiavelli says instead. *Mors acerba, fama perpetua, stabit vetus memoria facti* "Storie," vol. ii. lib vii p. 203. Olgiati's confession is found in Corio See also Rosmini's "Storia di Milano," vol iii p 23; Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom" (zweite Auflage), vol vii. p 241 and fol; "Cola Montano, Studii storici" di Gerolamo Lorenzi Milan, 1875

but between *fat* people and *small* people (*popolo grasso* and *popolo minuto*), into major and minor arts or guilds Of these, the former were engaged in wholesale commerce and the great business of exportation and importation, while the latter carried on the retail traffic and internal trade of the city. From this arose division and often collision of interests, and thence the formation of new political parties. Whenever it was a question of aggrandizing the territory of the Republic; of making war upon Pisa to keep open the way to the sea, or upon Sienna to monopolize trade with Rome; or of repulsing the continual and threatening attacks of the Visconti of Milan, government invariably fell into the hands of the Arti Maggiori, who were richer, more enterprising and better able to comprehend and guard the important interests of the State beyond its boundaries. But, when war was at an end, and peace re-established, then immediately the Arti Minori, spurred on by the lowest populace, rose in rebellion against the new aristocracy of wealth which oppressed them with continual wars and taxes, and demanded increased liberty and more general equality.

These continual alternations lasted more than a century, namely, down to the time when the territory of the Republic was constituted, and the prolonged wars with Milan came to an end Then the final triumph of the minor guilds became inevitable, and it was their inexperience and intemperance that smoothed the way for the establishment of the tyranny of the Medici

It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that the Medici rose to power by the same means and artifices employed by the Visconti and the Sforza. Had any one arbitrarily attempted to torture the citizens of Florence, to bury any of them alive, or to have them torn to pieces by dogs, as did the Lords of Milan, he would have been instantly swept away by the popular indignation, and by the union of the Greater and Lesser guilds. The importance and political speciality of the Medici consisted precisely in the fact that their victory was the result of traditional rules of conduct carried out by that family, for more than a century, with unrivalled constancy and acuteness, so that they contrived to consolidate their power without having recourse to violence And to have succeeded in this in a city so acute, so restless, so jealous of its ancient liberties, was a proof of true political genius. As far back as 1378, during the disorderly revolt of the Ciompi, we find the hand of Salvestro di Medici, who, although belonging to the greater guilds, assisted and spurred on the lesser to overthrow their power, thus achieving great popularity. That tumult being suppressed, and war having again broken out—the greater guilds and the Albizzi

family being therefore once more in power—we find Vieri dei Medici leading a quiet life, always devoted to money-making. He never ceased, however, to show himself favourable to the popular party, in which he contrived to gain so much influence that Machiavelli said of him :—"That, had he been more ambitious than good, he might, without hindrance, have made himself master of the city."[1]

But Vieri understood too well the temper of the times, and was content to wait and prepare the way for Giovanni di Bicci, who was the true political founder of his house This latter clearly saw the impossibility of changing the government of Florence by violent means, and that no object was to be gained by holding power, even repeatedly, in a Republic which changed its chief magistrates every two months There was but one method of obtaining real and assured predominance, namely, by marshalling under his orders a party of sufficient strength and prudence to guarantee the highest offices of the Republic to its own adherents in perpetuity. And the Albizzi had soon occasion to perceive that this design was prospering, for their adversaries—notwithstanding perpetual admonishments and sentences of exile—were always elected in increasing numbers In vain the former attempted to countermine Giovanni dei Medici's work by inopportune proposals of laws intended to weaken the Lesser Guilds, for they could not get them passed in Council without their adversary's help, and this he openly refused them, thus continually increasing his power with the people (1426). It was Giovanni dei Medici who proposed and supported the law of *Catasto*,[2] by which it was ordained that the amount of every citizen's possessions should be verified and registered, a law which prevented the powerful from levying taxes *ad libitum* to the oppression of the weak. The law was carried, the authority of the Medici was thereby much increased, and, while really making a rapid flight towards power, they seemed to be wholly intent on giving a more democratic form to the Republic. This, both then and afterwards, was their favourite device

When Cosimo dei Medici succeeded his father in 1429, he was forty years of age, and being already a man of great authority and fortune on his own account, found his way clear before him. He had largely increased his paternal inheritance by commerce, and he used his means so generously, lending and giving on all sides, that there was hardly any man of weight in Florence who had

[1] Machiavelli, "Storie," vol i lib iii p. 193

[2] Upon this point there has been much controversy. *Vide* "Archivio Storico Italiano," series v. vol. i. p. 185.

not sought and received help from him in moments of need. Thus, without ever laying aside, at all events in appearance, the modesty of the private citizen, every day saw the increase of his influence, which was employed by him to destroy the last remains of the power of the Albizzi and their friends. These, goaded to desperation, rose in rebellion, and drove him into exile, not daring to do worse (1433). But Cosimo still preserved his prudent calm. He went to Venice in the attitude of a benefactor repaid by ingratitude, and was everywhere received like a prince. The following year a popular revolt, fomented by a countless number of those whom he had benefited—or who hoped for benefits on the fall of the Albizzi—recalled him to Florence. If powerful at his departure, he was much more powerful on his return, and was, moreover, animated by a spirit of revenge. He now threw aside his former reserve in order to profit by the favourable moment. Without shedding too much blood, he thoroughly broke up the adverse party by means of persecution and exile, abasing the great and exalting men "of low and vile condition."[1] To those who accused him of excess, and of ruining too many citizens, he was accustomed to answer: that States could not be governed by paternosters, and that with a few ells of crimson cloth, new and worthy citizens could easily be manufactured.[2]

Cosimo dei Medici was now *de facto* master of Florence, but he was still, *de jure*, a private citizen, whose power, based solely and wholly on his personal influence, might fail at any moment. Therefore, he set to work to consolidate it, by a method as novel as it was sagacious. He brought about the creation of a *Balìa*, empowered to elect chief magistrates for a term of five years. Composed of citizens devoted to himself, this Balìa secured his position for a long time; and by having it renewed every five years in the same way, he was able to solve the strange problem of being for all the rest of his life, Prince and absolute master of a Republic, without ever holding any public office, or discarding the semblance of a private citizen. This did not, however, prevent him from occasionally having recourse to bloodshed. When he beheld in the city the daily increasing power of Neri dei Gino Capponi, that sagacious politician and valiant soldier, who had the support of Baldaccio d'Anghiari, Captain of the infantry forces, Cosimo, not daring to attack him openly, determined to do so through his friends. Accordingly, no sooner was a personal enemy of Baldaccio elected Gonfaloniere, than, during a sudden

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia di Firenze," p. 6.

[2] He meant by this that given the cloth necessary for robes of office, all men could be citizens.

tumult, Baldaccio was thrown from a window of the palace of the Signoria; and all men suspected, though none could prove, that Cosimo was the chief instigator of the crime.[1] But after this he continued to govern with what were then called *modi civili*, or gentle means, and which were always the device of the Medici. Though possessed of but little culture, this sagacious merchant, nailed to his office desk, this unscrupulous politician, surrounded himself with artists and men of letters. Frugal to meanness in his personal expenditure, he lavished treasures in encouraging the fine arts, in constructing churches, libraries, and other public edifices: he passed the most delightful hours of his life in listening to and commenting on Plato's "Dialogues;" he founded the Platonic Academy. Thus it is in great measure owing to him that Florence now became the principal centre of European culture. He had divined that in modern society, arts, letters, and science were becoming a power which every government ought to take into account.

Nor was his foreign policy less sagacious. Having protected Nicholas and helped him with money when he was a Cardinal, he found him most friendly as Pope; and thus the business affairs of the Curia were entrusted to the Medici's bank in Rome, no little to their profit. Sooner than other men, Cosimo had foreseen the future destiny of Francesco Sforza, and had gained his friendship: so that the latter on becoming Lord of Milan, proved a powerful and faithful ally. Then the continual wars with Milan came to an end, and Florence owed to Cosimo a long enduring peace. So it is not surprising if, after his death, the rule of the Medici still going on, he should be styled *Pater patriae*. Machiavelli declares that he was the most renowned citizen, "for a civilian" "d'uomo disarmato" that Florence, or any other city, ever possessed. In his opinion, no man ever equalled Cosimo in political insight, for he discerned evils from afar, and provided against them in time; thus he was able to hold the State for thirty-one years, "through so great variety of fortune, in so restless a city, with citizens of so changeable a temper." ("In tanta varietà di fortuna, in sì varia città, e volubile cittadinanza")[2] Nor was the equally authoritative opinion of Guicciardini different from this. Yet under his course of policy all the old Florentine institutions were reduced to empty names, without one new one

[1] Machiavelli, who in his "Storie Florentine" frequently tries to exculpate the Medici, considers the Gonfalonier Bartolommeo Orlandini sole author of the crime. Guicciardini, on the contrary, who in his "Storia di Firenze," judges the Medici much more impartially, attributes everything to Cosimo.

[2] Machiavelli, "Storie," vol ii pp. 148–52.

springing up; thus continual vigilance and an inexhaustible series of ever fresh contrivances were required to carry on the machinery of the State.

The last years of Cosimo's life passed very dismally for Florence, since the adherents of the Medici, no longer restrained by the prudence of their chief, who was now overcome by the infirmities of age, began to show their partizanship, and to persecute and exile their enemies to excess. Nor were things changed during the short rule of Cosimo's son Piero. But at his death (1469), Lorenzo and Giuliano appeared upon the scene: and the first of these, though only twenty-one years old, was already a notable personage. Educated by the first men of letters of the age, he had proved himself the equal of many of them in wit and learning; in travelling through Italy to visit the different courts and gain experience of mankind, he had left everywhere a great opinion of his talents. He resolutely seized the reins of government, and foreseeing that the election of the new Balìa would not be certain in the Council of the Hundred, he managed, with the help of his most trustworthy friends, and as if by surprise, to have the Signori in office and the old Balìa empowered to elect the new. Having in this manner secured a five years' term of power, he was able to set to work without anxiety.

Lorenzo inherited his grandfather's political sagacity and far surpassed him in talent and literary culture. In many respects too he was a very different man. Cosimo never left his business office; Lorenzo neglected it, and had so little commercial aptitude that he was obliged to retire from business, in order to preserve his abundant patrimony. Cosimo was frugal in his personal expenses and lent freely to others: Lorenzo loved splendid living, and thus gained the title of the Magnificent; he spent immoderately for the advancement of literary men; he gave himself up to dissipation which ruined his health and shortened his days. His manner of living reduced him to such straits, that he had to sell some of his possessions and obtain money from his friends. Nor did this suffice; for he even meddled with the public money, a thing that had never happened in Cosimo's time. Very often, in his greed of unlawful gain, he had the Florentine armies paid by his own bank; he also appropriated the sums collected in the *Monte Comune* or treasury of the public debt, and those in the *Monte delle Fanciulle*, where marriage portions were accumulated by private savings—moneys hitherto held sacred by all.

Stimulated by the same greed, he, in the year 1472, joined the Florentine contractors for the wealthy alum mines of Volterra, at

the moment in which that city was on the verge of rebellion in order to free itself from a contract which it deemed unjust. And Lorenzo, with the weight of his authority, pushed matters to such a point that war broke out, soon to be followed by a most cruel sack of the unhappy city, a very unusual event in Tuscany.[1] For all this he was universally blamed. But he was excessively haughty, and cared for no man: he would tolerate no equals, would be first in everything—even in games. He interfered in all matters, even in private concerns and in marriages: nothing could take place without his consent. In overthrowing the powerful and exalting men of low condition, he showed none of the care and precaution so uniformly observed by Cosimo.

It is not then surprising if his enemies increased so fast as to lead to that formidable conspiracy of the Pazzi of the 26th of April, 1478. In this plot, hatched in the Vatican itself where Sixtus IV. was Lorenzo's decided enemy, many of the mightiest Florentine families took part. In the cathedral, at the moment of the elevation of the Host, the conspirators' daggers were unsheathed. Giuliano dei Medici was stabbed to death, but Lorenzo defended himself with his sword and saved his own life. The tumult was so great that it seemed as though the walls of the church were shaken. The populace rose to the cry of *Palle! Palle!* the Medici watchword, and the enemies of the Medici were slaughtered in the streets or hung from the windows of the Palazzo Vecchio. There, among others, were seen the dangling corpses of Archbishop Salviati and of Francesco Pazzi, who, gripping each other with their teeth in their last struggle, retained that posture for a time. More than seventy persons perished that day, and Lorenzo, taking advantage of the opportunity, pushed matters to extremity by his confiscations, banishments, and sentences of death. Thereby his power would have been infinitely increased if Pope Sixtus IV., blinded by rage, had not been induced to excommunicate Florence, and make war against it, in conjunction with Ferdinand of Aragon. On this Lorenzo, without losing a moment, went straight to Naples, and made the king understand how much better it would serve his interests for Florence to have but one ruler, instead of a republican government always liable to change and certainly never friendly to Naples. So he returned with peace re-established and boundless authority and popularity. Now indeed he might have called himself lord of the city, and it must have seemed easy to him to destroy the republican government altogether. With his pride and ambition it is certain that

[1] *Vide*, among other Florentine historians of the time, the "Cronache Volterrane," published by Tabarrini in the "Archivio Storico," vol iii p 317 and fol.

he had an intense desire to stand on the same level with the other princes and tyrants of Italy, the more so as at that moment success seemed entirely within his grasp. But Lorenzo showed that his political shrewdness was not to be blinded by prosperity, and knowing Florence well, he remained firm to the traditional policy of his house, *i.e.*, of dominating the Republic, while apparently respecting it.

He was well determined to render his power solid and durable; and to that end had recourse to a most ingenious reform, by means of which, without abandoning the old path, he thoroughly succeeded in his aim.

In place of the usual five-yearly Balìa, he instituted, in 1480, the Council of Seventy, which renewed itself and resembled a permanent Balìa with still wider powers. This, composed of men entirely devoted to his cause, secured the government to him for ever. By this Council, say the chroniclers of the time, liberty was wholly buried and undone,[1] but certainly the most important affairs of the State were carried on in it by intelligent and cultivated men, who largely promoted the general prosperity. Florence still called itself a republic, the old institutions were nominally still in existence, but all this seemed and was no more than an empty mockery. Lorenzo, absolute lord of all, might certainly be called a tyrant, surrounded by lackeys and courtiers—whom he often rewarded by entrusting them with the management of charitable funds;—leading a life of scandalous immorality, keeping up continual and general *espionnage;* interfering in the most private affairs; forbidding marriages between persons of condition that were not to his taste, and bestowing the most important offices on the lowest men, who thus, as Guicciardini puts it, "had become rulers of the roast."[2] Yet he dazzled all men by the splendour of his rule, so that the same writer observes, that though Lorenzo was a tyrant, "it would be impossible to imagine a better and more pleasing tyrant."

Industry, commerce, public works had all received a mighty impulse. In no city in the world had the civil equality of modern States reached the degree to which it had attained not merely in Florence itself, but in its whole territory and throughout all Tuscany. Administration and secular justice proceeded regularly enough in ordinary cases, crime was diminished, and above all,

[1] "Diarii di Alamanno Rinuccini," published by Ajazzi, Florence, 1840, pp. cx-xii. In the "Archivio Storico," vol. i pp 315 and fol, are the two *Provisions* that instituted the Council of Seventy, published and annotated by the Marchese Gino Capponi.

[2] "Storia Fiorentina," chap ix. p 91.

literary culture had become a substantial element of the new State. Learned men were employed in public offices, and from Florence spread a light that illuminated the world Lorenzo, with his varied and well-cultivated talents, his keen penetration and unerring judgment in all departments of knowledge, was no ordinary patron and Mæcenas; he stood among the first *literati* of his age, and took an active part in the labours he promoted, not only in the interests of his government, but also from real and undoubted intellectual taste Nevertheless, in order to turn letters to political uses, he endeavoured by his festivals and his carnivalesque songs to enervate and corrupt the people, and succeeded only too well. Thus, without an army, without the lawful command of the State, he was master of Florence and of Tuscany, and moreover exercised immense influence over all the Italian potentates His enemy, Sixtus IV, was dead. Pope Innocent VIII. was not only his friend, but married a relation into his family, bestowed a Cardinal's hat on his infant son Giovanni, and always turned to him for advice The inextinguishable hatred that burned between Lodovico the Moor and Ferdinand of Aragon, a hatred which threatened to set all Italy ablaze, was held in bounds by Lorenzo—for that reason rightly called the balancing needle of Italy—and it was not till after his death that it led to fatal consequences. His political letters, frequently examples of political wisdom as well as elegance, were pronounced by the historian Guicciardini to be among the most eloquent of the age

But Lorenzo's policy could found nothing that was permanent. Unrivalled as a model of sagacity and prudence, it promoted in Florence the development of all the new elements of which modern society was to be the outcome, without succeeding in fusing them together; for his was a policy of equivocation and deceit, directed by a man of much genius, who had no higher aim than his own interest and that of his family, to which he never hesitated to sacrifice the interests of his people.

3 *Venice.*

The history of Venice stands in apparently direct contradiction with that of Florence. The latter, in fact, shows us a series of revolutions which, starting from an aristocratic government, reached the extreme point of democratic equality, only to fall later under the despotism of a single head; while Venice, on the contrary, proceeded with order and firmness to the formation of

an increasingly powerful aristocracy. Florence vainly sought to preserve liberty by too frequent changes of magistrates; Venice elected the Doge for life, rendered a seat in the Grand Council an hereditary honour, firmly established the Republic, became a great power, and retained her liberty for many centuries. This enormous divergence, however, is not only easily explained, but is much reduced in our eyes when we examine the special conditions amid which the Venetian Republic grew into shape. Founded by Italian refugees, who settled in the lagoons to escape the tide of barbarian invasion, it was exposed but little, if at all, to the influence of Feudalism and the other Germanic laws and institutions which had so widely penetrated into many parts of Italy. Thus in Venice from the very beginning there were seen opposed to each other the people engaged in industry and commerce and the old Italian families, who without the support of the empire, or the strength of the feudal order, were very easily overruled and conquered.

An aristocracy of wealth was quickly formed, and these new nobles had no difficulty in taking possession of the government and holding it for ever. This triumph which, in Florence, was the slow result of many and frequent struggles, was in Venice as permanent as it was rapid. From the first, the prosperity of the lagoons was entirely dependent upon the distant expeditions and far-spreading commerce which everywhere formed the strength of the burghers or *popolo grasso*. Then, while on the one hand the energies of the people or *popolo minuto* were employed for many months of the year in lengthy voyages, on the other the government of the colonies gave opportunities of command to the more ambitious citizens, without any danger to the Republic.

Thus the Venetian Constitution, in its first origin but little different from that of other Italian Communes, went on from change to change owing to the widely different conditions by which it was surrounded. From the beginning the Doge was elected for life, because the city being divided in many islands, all tending to render themselves independent of one another, the need of greater centralization was soon made manifest. But the Doge was surrounded by nine citizens who composed the *Signoria*, and there were, as in other cities, two Councils, the Senate or *Pregati*, and the Grand Council. On solemn occasions, an appeal was made to the people collected in a public assembly called Airengo, answering to the Parliament of Florence. Had things stood still at this point, the Venetian Constitution, with the exception of the Doge for life, would not have been radically

different from that of Florence But the far greater strength quickly acquired by the aristocracy of wealth, for the reasons above mentioned, gradually concentrated nearly all the power of the State in the Grand Council, which, on the abolition of the Arengo and the narrowing of the Doge's authority, was the true sovereign power, and became hereditary through a series of slow reforms between the years 1297 and 1319, leading to what was called the *Serrata* of the Grand Council. Thus the circle was closed, and government was in the hands of a powerful aristocracy that later on instituted a Golden Book.

But although here, in Venice, there was no feudal principle to be fought against, these reforms were not carried without much opposition on the part of the old families, who, seeing themselves excluded from the government, sought and found adherents among the lowest classes. The conspiracy of Tiepolo Baiamonte (1310) was formidable enough for a few days to place the very existence of the republic in extremity of peril But after a fierce conflict within and without the city, it was suffocated in bloodshed, and followed by the creation of the Council of Ten, a terrible tribunal which, by summary trials, but always in accordance with the laws, punished by death every attempt at revolt Then, indeed, all danger was warded off from the aristocratic government, and it daily gained fresh strength The solidity of Venetian institutions favoured the progress of Venetian commerce, and increased riches gave courage for new undertakings in the East, the field of Venetian glory and Venetian gain.

In the East the republic had encountered two powerful rivals, Pisa and Genoa; but the maritime power of the Pisans was shattered at the Meloria (1284) by the Genoese, who in their turn after a long and sanguinary struggle were irreparably defeated by the Venetians at Chioggia in 1380. And thus by the end of the fourteenth century Venice was free from all rivals, mistress of the seas, in the enjoyment of internal security, and most prosperous in commerce. Then she aspired to conquest on the mainland, and entered upon a second period of her history, during which she found herself involved in all the intrigues of Italian politics, lost her primitive character of an exclusively maritime power, and began to be corrupt. Hence the weighty accusations brought against her by contemporaries and posterity alike, but it was irresistible necessity that had forced her into the new path. In fact, when great States were springing up on all sides, the dominion of the lagoons was no longer secure, and it was no longer enough to watch over her own commerce on the mainland. The Scaligeri,

the Visconti, the Carrara, the Este, detested the thriving Republic They threatened it and isolated it in its own lagoons precisely when it most needed new markets for its superior wares; for its trade with the East which was only to be fed by that with the West. And when the Turks advanced and began to check the conquests of the Republic and threaten its colonies for other reasons, this need became still more pressing.

It is true that Venice was then attacked by a thousand dangers on both sides; but these dangers were inevitable, and she met them, fighting by land and by sea, with heroic ardour, and at first with unexpected good fortune. Venice certainly was somewhat unscrupulous in promoting her new interests; often compelled in Italy to combat disloyal enemies, she too made use of violence and fraud. Yet it was never the personal caprice of an individual subjecting all things to his own will; it was a patriotic aristocracy giving its blood for its country. In the fifteenth century the first to feel the claws of the lion of St Mark were the Carrara, lords of Padua, who were strangled to death in 1403. After that, Venice sent to Padua a *Rector* for civil, and a Captain for military affairs, leaving intact all old laws and local institutions. The same took place, or had already taken place, in Friuli, Istria, Vicenza, Verona, Treviso. It was a very intelligent and liberal policy for those times; but with their independence, the new subjects lost for ever all hope of liberty. The conquered territories certainly derived great advantages from being under a strong and just government and sharing in the immense trade of Venice; but although material well-being might make the multitude forget their love of liberty and independence, there remained in all the powerful families who had held or hoped to hold rule, an intense hatred for the new tyrant, who was envied for the stability and strength of her government, and considered the most formidable enemy of all the other Italian States.

She proceeded on her course of conquest, and the fifteenth century, in which Italy began rapidly to decline, seemed on the contrary to open to Venice an era of increased prosperity. Her nobles had made men forget the irregularity of their origin, by the enormous sacrifices they had made for their country, and by the valour they had shown in the naval battles in which they commanded. Absorbed in political life, they freely left to the people all commerce and industry, which prospered miraculously under the shelter of a fixed government and victorious arms.

Even the advance of the Turks, which later wrought such terrible harm on the republic, seemed at this period almost to turn to its advantage. In fact, many islands of the archipelago,

and other States, finding themselves in great danger through the impotence of the Greek Empire to defend them from the terrible hurricane that was drawing near, invoked the protection of Venice and gave themselves into her hands. Thus her dominions were enlarged and fresh subjects acquired, ready to pour out their blood in combating the common enemy, who, in the earlier encounters, suffered very heavy losses. All these things helped to rouse the spirit of the Venetians, who at this time believed themselves destined to be the bulwark of Christendom and the dominant power in Italy Throughout their political dealings, in the correspondence of their ambassadors, in their continual wars by sea and land, patriotic feeling over-ruled every other, and inspired a noble boldness of language in citizens who were ever ready to lay down their lives for their country. The honour, the glory of Venice, was always their dominant motive; and in their struggle against the advancing Turks they gave continued proofs of heroism When the Venetian fleet encountered its formidable enemy near Gallipoli, in May, 1416, Pietro Loredano, its commander, wrote to his government. "Boldly did I, the captain, crash against the foremost of the enemy's galleys, full of Turks, who fought like dragons Surrounded on all sides, wounded by an arrow which had passed through my jaw beneath the eye, by another through my hand, as also by many more, I did not cease from fighting, nor would I have ceased till death. I captured the first galley and planted my flag upon it. The Turks who were on board were cut to pieces, the rest of the fleet routed."[1] Venice alone, in the Italy of the fifteenth century, was capable of enterprises so daring and language so frank The little republic of the lagoons had become one of the greatest potentates of Europe But the dangers closing in around her were immense and waxing greater on all sides

The Doge Tommaso Mocenigo foresaw these dangers, and on his death-bed, in April, 1423, prayed and entreated his friends not to be tempted to undertake wars and conquests, and above all not to elect as his successor Francesco Foscari, whose immoderate ambition would certainly drag them into the most audacious and perilous enterprises But these prudent counsels were uttered in vain. Filippo Maria Visconti was then threatening all Northern and Central Italy; the Turks were on the advance Francesco Foscari was duly elected, and he certainly was not the man to bring back into harbour a vessel already launched on the open sea. No sooner did the Florentines implore help against the

[1] Romanin ("Storia documentata di Venezia," vol iv. lib x chap. 3) quotes from Sanuto all this account, of which we have given a brief summary.

Visconti, than he exclaimed in the Senate:—"Were I at the end of the world and saw a people in danger of losing its liberty, I would hasten to its assistance." "Nu patiremo che Filippo tuoga la libertà ai Fiorentini? Sto furibondo tiran scorrerà per tutta Italia, la struggerà e conquasserà senza gastigo?"[1] Thus, in 1426, began the formidable struggle which, frequently interrupted and renewed, only ended with the death of Visconti in the year 1447.

In these twenty-one years Foscari showed a truly Roman patriotism and energy, struggling against external and internal dangers of every kind. Each year the Visconti's treasures enabled him to bring fresh armies into the field, and the Venetian Republic was always ready to meet them. Carmagnola, who had come over to the Venetians, gave cause for suspicion immediately after his first victories, and was, without hesitation, brought to a regular trial and condemned to death. On the 5th of May, 1432, *cum una sprangha in bucha, et cum manibus ligatis de retro juxta solitum,*[2] he was led between the columns of the Piazzetta and there beheaded. In 1430 there was an attempt against the Doge's life, and in 1433 a conspiracy against his government: the Ten brought swift and exemplary justice to bear upon the guilty parties. Later, at the instigation of the Visconti, the last of the Carrara tried to reconquer his lost dominions, and persuaded Ostasio da Polenta, lord of Ravenna, to throw off his allegiance to Venice. Carrara lost his head between the columns of the Piazzetta (1435), Polenta died in exile at Crete, and Ravenna was added to the Venetian territory. After Visconti's death, and shortly after the cessation of hostilities with Milan, there occurred the fall of Constantinople (1453), in which so many Italians, especially Venetians, lost their lives. This event, marking a new epoch in the history of Europe, was a mortal blow to Venice. Yet, in 1454, she succeeded in making a treaty, which ensured free trade to her subjects, and gave her time to prepare for new conflicts.

But the chief danger to the Republic sprang from the fresh germs of corruption, now beginning to threaten it with internal discord. Foscari's enemies, not content with having plotted against his life and his government, now assailed him by bitter persecution of his last surviving son, Jacopo, a man of very frivolous character, but blindly beloved by his father. Exiled, in 1445, for having accepted gifts, which the laws strictly forbade to the Doge's son, he, after having obtained pardon, was again condemned to exile in Canea in 1451, for supposed connivance in the

[1] Romanin, "Storia documentata di Venezia," vol. iv. p. 108.
[2] The words of the sentence as given by Romanin.

assassination of one of his former judges. Recalled from his place of exile in 1456, he was subjected to a fresh trial, for having maintained a secret correspondence with the Duke of Milan, and condemned to a longer term of banishment. Entering the prison, the old Doge, unmoved by the sight of his son imploring pardon at his feet, exclaimed:—"Go, obey the will of thy country, and seek for nought else." But hardly had he tottered from the prison, leaning on his staff, than he fell into a swoon.[1] Shortly afterwards Jacopo Foscari died in exile (12th January, 1457), and the paternal heart of the man, who had sustained with an iron resolution, a gigantic struggle in defence of the Republic, broke down under the persecutions heaped upon his son. Aged, worn out, crushed, he had no longer the strength required to conduct State affairs, and to defend himself from his enemies. On being invited to resign, and refusing to do so, he was formally deposed. His ring having been broken off, the ducal cap removed from his head, he calmly descended the same stairs by which he had mounted on his accession to the Dogeship, quietly conversing with those who were near, and without accepting any offered arm. His successor was elected on the 30th October, and he died of a broken heart on the 1st of November, after a thirty-four years' reign. Francesco Foscari was certainly one of the greatest political characters of his time.[2] With him, Venice attained the height of her power; after him she soon began to decline, though remaining heroic even in decay.

Forsaken by all the rest of Italy, she was left alone to confront the Turks, who were advancing with formidable forces. The *sopra-comito* (or admiral) Girolamo Longo wrote in 1468 that the Turkish fleet which he had to encounter was of four hundred sail, and six miles in length. "The sea seemed a forest. This may seem an incredible thing to hear, but it is a marvellous thing to behold; . . . now see if by stratagem it be possible to gain an advantage. Men and not words are what is required."[3] These seem almost like accents of fear beside those words of Loredano, which we have already quoted. Times, in fact, were changed: the Republic continued to send forth fresh fleets, which fought heroically; it organized the resistance of all Christian populations, who freely gave their blood for the cause; it sent arms and money to the Persians, so that they too might aid to check the threaten-

[1] "Diarii" di Marin Sanuto, and the "Cronaca" of Delfin. See the fragments cited by Romanin, vol. iv. p. 286, and fol.

[2] The following inscription was placed upon his tomb: "*Post mare perdomitum, post urbes marte subactas, Florentem patriam, longævus pace reliqui.*"

[3] This letter is in the *Annali* of Malipiero, and is also quoted by Romanin, vol. iv. pp. 335, 336.

ing-march of Mahomet II.; but all was in vain. Negroponte, Caffa, Scutari, other cities and possessions, fell one after another, in spite of their valiant defence. And at last Venice, weary of always standing alone to combat the enemy of Christianity, in January, 1479 made a peace, which guaranteed her own commerce, and which, seeing the sad state to which she was reduced, might be considered honourable. Then the rest of Italy joined in violent abuse of Venice, the more so when their alarm reached its climax in 1480 by the taking of Otranto by the Turks. But shortly after, the death of Mahomet II, and the consequent disorders at home, recalled the Turkish invaders from our shores, and Italy thought no more upon the subject.

From this time forward the horizon of the Republic grows narrower and narrower. Solely occupied by material interests, involved in the intrigues of Italian policy, it no longer assumes the guardianship of the Peninsula, and of all Christendom, against the Moslem, and every fresh event of the world's history seems to be to the injury of Venice. The discovery of America, and of the Cape of Good Hope, removed her from the principal highways of commerce. Reduced on all sides, she lost, together with her great gains, the historical importance which had been hers as the connecting link between the East and the West. Now she was reduced to snatching this or that scrap of territory from her neighbours, and imposing on them her still great and powerful trade. Her dominions now extended on one side to the Adda, on the other she held Ravenna, Cervia, Rimini, Faenza, Cesena, and Imola in the Romagna: in the Trentino she held Roveredo and its dependencies; she had carried her arms as far as the Adriatic coast of the Neapolitan kingdom, and held some lands there. But this very fact of her having taken something from all, had gained her the fear and hatred of all.

Then again, this vast State was all under the rule of one city, in which but a small proportion of the citizens had a hereditary right to command. Not even in Venice, therefore, was it possible to hope for the wide and organic development of a modern State; she remained rather as a survival of old republican institutions, outliving itself, and condemned to perish for want of nourishment. Meanwhile, it was still the strongest, most moral government in Italy; but as its circle of activity diminished, so too diminished the magnanimous virtues, the heroic characters, born of the great perils they had had to struggle against, and of the continual sacrifices to which they were summoned. Instead of these, there ensued in the ruling class an enormous growth of egotism, luxury, and greed for gold. The jewel-loaded, satin-clad wives of the

Venetian patricians, inhabited during the fifteenth century abodes of greater richness than any that were to be found in the palaces of Italian potentates "The men," says the Milanese writer Pietro da Casola, "were more modest and austere; they dressed like so many doctors of the law, and those who dealt with them had to keep both eyes and ears wide open"[1] But their policy, if less egotistical than that prevalent in the rest of Italy, was still that of a narrow local and class interest. They looked almost with pleasure on the ruin of Italy, hoping thus to insure their own power over it And when foreign armies approached the Alps, they allowed them free passage, in the belief that they could later drive them back, and command in their place. The contrary ensued; this selfishness of theirs, which helped no man and threatened all, led to the League of Cambray, in which nearly the whole of Europe arrayed itself against the little Republic, which, in spite of its gallant resistance, could not, as it had hoped, secure its own safety in the midst of the general ruin of the whole country.

4 *Rome.*

Amid the infinite variety of characters and institutions presented to us by Italy in the fifteenth century, the history of Rome forms almost a world apart. Chief centre of the interests of all Christian lands, the Eternal City was more sensitive than any other to the great transformations going on in Europe. The formation of great and independent States had broken up and rendered for ever impossible the universal unity of which the Middle Ages had had some prevision, and had even partially fulfilled. The Empire was becoming more and more restricted within the German frontiers, and the aim of the Emperor was to strengthen his position by settled and direct dominion within his own proper States. Therefore the Papacy, henceforward condemned to renounce its pretensions to universal sovereignty in the world, felt the urgent necessity of constituting a secure and genuine temporal kingdom. But the transfer of the Holy See to Avignon, and the long-enduring schism had thrown the States of the Church into disorder and anarchy Rome was a free Commune, with a similar constitution to that of the other Italian Republics, but industry and commerce had not flourished there, nor had its political organism ever attained a vigorous development, chiefly in consequence of the exceptional supremacy exercised by the Pope, and

[1] See the "Viaggio" of Brother Pietro da Casola, a Milanese, published by G Porro, Milan, Ripamonti, 1855. Romanin, vol. iv pp 494, 495, quotes some fragments.

the excessive power of the nobles who threw everything into confusion. The Orsini, the Colonna, the Prefetti di Vico, were sovereign rulers in their immense domains, in which they had stores of arms and armed men; they nominated judges and notaries, and sometimes even coined money. Besides, there were also cities who were, or were continually trying to render themselves independent within the Roman territory, which extended from the Garigliano to the confines of Tuscany.

Every one, too, can imagine to what condition the Papal sway was reduced in cities like Bologna, Urbino, Faenza, and Ancona, all independent Republics or Lordships. Therefore, in order to form a temporal kingdom, a war of conquest was necessary. This Innocent VI. (1352-62) had attempted to begin, by means of Cardinal d'Albornoz, who, by fire and sword, brought a great portion of the State into submission. But this boasted submission was in fact reduced to the construction, in all principal cities, of fortresses held in the Pope's name; to transforming the tyrants into vicars of the Church, and compelling the Republics to take an oath of obedience, while their statutes were left intact. In this way the Este, the Montefeltro, the Malatesta, the Alidosi, the Manfredi, the Ordelaffi, were legitimate lords of Ferrara, Urbino, Imola, Rimini, Faenza, Forlì; while Bologna, Fermo, Ascoli, and other cities remained Republics. The political constitution of Rome then began to be changed into an administrative constitution by the destruction of ancient liberties, and Popes Urban V. and Gregory XI. continued in the same path; but the prolonged schism in the Church again plunged everything into anarchy, and prevented the formation of any strong government or any stable authority.

At last, in the year 1417, the Council of Constance put an end to the schism, by deposing three Popes and electing Oddo Colonna, who took the name of Martin V. Thus the history of the Papacy enters on a new period which lasts until the beginning of the following century, and during this time the successors of St. Peter seem to put aside all thought of religion, and devote themselves exclusively to the construction of a temporal kingdom. Having become exactly similar to other Italian tyrants, they profited by the same arts of government. Still the great diversity of their station in the world, and the peculiar temper of the State they tried to rule, endued their proceedings with a special character. Generally elected at a very advanced age, the Popes suddenly found themselves in the midst of a riotous and powerful nobility, at the head of a disordered and loosened State, in a turbulent city where frequently they were without adherents, and not seldom

complete strangers Therefore to gain strength, they favoured and enriched nephews who were often their own sons; and thus originated the great Church scandal, known as Nepotism, and which specially appertains to this century. Then having once been drawn into the tumultuous vortex of Italian politics, the Popes found themselves compelled to promote simultaneously two different interests, not unfrequently at variance the one with the other, i.e., the political and the religious interest. Religion became an instrument for the advancement of their political ends, and thus, though only rulers of a small State, they were able to turn all Italy upside down, and without succeeding in bringing it into subjection, to keep it weak and divided until it fell a prey to the foreigners, whom they continually called to their aid. On the other hand, brute force and political authority were used to keep alive the religious prestige which had no longer any root in men's minds Such a state of things confused all conscientious feeling in these representatives of God upon earth, and made them gradually fall into so horrible a delirium of obscenity and crime, that all decency was forsaken, and the Vatican became the scene of every imaginable orgy and outrage, of plots and poisonings It seemed as though the Papacy desired to extirpate all religious feeling from the mind of man, and overthrow for ever every basis of morality

The first germs of this fatal corruption of the Papacy originated in the conditions in which it then was, and quickly bore fruit under Martin V, who was, however, the best Pope of that century. He arrived from Constance,—according to the expression of a modern writer,—like a lord without lands, so that in Florence the street-boys followed him with jeering songs. Entering Rome on the 28th of September, 1420, with the aid of Queen Giovanna of Naples, the Roman people, having by this time lost all their free institutions, presented themselves to him as a throng of beggars War, pestilence, and famine had ravaged the eternal city for many years; monuments, churches, and houses were alike in ruin; the streets full of heaps of stones and boggy holes, thieves robbing and pillaging by day as well as night. All agriculture had disappeared from the Campagna, and an immense extent of land had become a desert; the cities of the Roman territory were at war with each other, and the nobles, shut up in their strongholds which were mere robbers' dens, despised all authority, would submit to no control, no law, and led the lives of brigands Martin V. set to work with firmness, and first of all completed the destruction of Roman freedom, by changing the city into an administrative municipality. Then many rebel

domains were subjected, many leaders of armed bands taken and hung; order thus began to be re-established, and a form of regular government inaugurated. But this end was attained by the means we have alluded to above. The Pope, to gain adherents, threw himself entirely into the arms of his relatives, the Colonna, arranged wealthy marriages for them, conceded to them vast feuds in the States of the Church, or obtained the concession of others equally large in the kingdom of Naples. In this way he increased their already enormous power, and was the initiator of Nepotism. In order to keep up the asserted supremacy of the Popes in the kingdom of Naples, and get all possible advantages from it for his own friends, he gave his support, first to Giovanna II., who had assisted him to enter Rome; then to Louis of Anjou, her adversary; lastly, to Alfonso of Aragon, who triumphed over all. And this fatal system of policy, continued by his successors, was the principal cause of the almost utter destruction of the Neapolitan kingdom and of the ruin of Italy. Yet in Rome there was seen at last some show of order and of regular government. Streets, houses, and monuments were partially restored; for the first time for many years it was possible to walk through the city and out for some miles into the Campagna, without fear of robbery and assassination. Therefore after the Pope's death (20th Feb., 1431), his tomb bore these words: *Temporum suorum felicitas;* and the inscription cannot be said to be altogether unmerited, especially when we consider how speedily all his sins were thrown into the shade, by the far greater crimes of his successors.

Eugene IV., who leant upon the Orsini, thereby making deadly enemies of the Colonna, was quickly driven out of Rome by a revolution, and pursued with volleys of stones as he fled down the Tiber, cowering in a boat (June, 1434). Arrived in Florence, he had to re-establish his government over again and sent to Rome the patriarch, afterwards Cardinal Vitelleschi, who, at the head of armed bands, carried on with fire and sword a real war of extermination. The family of the Prefetti di Vico was extinguished by the execution of its last representative Giovanni; that of the Colonna was partly destroyed by the hardy prelate; the Savelli underwent the same fate. Many castles were razed to the ground, many cities destroyed, and their inhabitants scattered hunger-stricken over the Campagna where they wandered about in misery, sometimes even offering to sell themselves for slaves. When at last Vitelleschi, at the head of a small army, made a triumphal entry into the Eternal City, that trembled at his feet, the Pope, seized with suspicion, sent Scarampo, another prelate of the same

stamp, to supersede him. Vitelleschi, who attempted resistance, was surrounded, wounded, taken prisoner, and confined in the castle of St Angelo, where he died Then Eugene IV. was able to return quietly and safely to Rome, and died three years afterwards in 1447

There was some singularity in the destiny of this Pope, who finally subjected the Eternal City. While Vitelleschi and Scarampo were shedding rivers of blood, he remained in Florence enjoying festivals and the society of learned scholars. Without having much culture or love of letters, he found it necessary, when attending the Council of Florence, to employ interpreters to discuss and treat with the representatives of the Greek Church, and was therefore obliged to admit into the Curia learned men who quickly overran it, not without certain noteworthy changes in the history of the Papacy A solemn funeral oration in classic Latin was recited beside his bier by the celebrated scholar Tommaso Parentucelli, who was chosen as his successor, without being possessed of other merits than his erudition He took the name of Nicholas V., and it was a general saying that, in his person, learning itself had ascended the chair of St. Peter. Finding the Papal power sufficiently firm, Nicholas, although devoid of original talent, and also—gravest of defects in a scholar [illegible] of the fifteenth century—ignorant of Greek, but nevertheless [illegible] the greatest existing collector and arranger of ancient codices, carr[illegible]ed this passion with him to the Apostolic Chair, and made it the s[illegible]ole object of his pontificate

His dream was to convert Rome into a vast [illegible]ntre of lear[illegible]ing, into a great monumental city, with the finest [illegible] world. Had it been possible, he would have transported a[illegible] in the [illegible] to the banks of the Tiber. He scattered agents all over E[illegible]lorence [illegible] collect and copy ancient codices; scholars of all kinds were [illegible] to [illegible]ed large salaries as translators, without any regard to their religious or political opinions Valla, who had written most noisily against the temporal power, was one of the first to be summoned. Stefano Porcaro, who, like Cola dei Rienzo, had become, through his classical studies, infatuated for the Republic, was also overwhelmed with honours However, after he had entered into a conspiracy for firing the Vatican, and restoring republican institutions, the Pope lost patience with him, and let him be condemned to death But nothing could cool the ardour of Nicholas for learning, he thought that all things might be remedied by a few Latin speeches, even the fall of Constantinople; and he never ceased to collect manuscripts and summon men of learning to Rome. The Curia became an office for translators and copyists,

and the Vatican library was rapidly collected and enriched by many splendidly bound volumes At the same time new roads were opened, fortresses built, churches and monuments of all kinds erected. There reigned a perfect fever of activity, for the Pope, with the assistance of the first architects in the world, among whom was Leon Battista Alberti, had conceived a design, according to which Rome was to eclipse Florence. The leonine city was to be transformed into a great Papal fortress, in which St. Peter's and the Vatican were to be rebuilt from the very foundations. And although Nicholas V. did not succeed in completing this colossal enterprise, for which several generations would barely have sufficed, yet he initiated it with so much ardour, that during his reign the whole aspect of Rome was changed, and the immortal works executed in the times of Julius II. and Leo X. were but the fulfilment of his own design.

On the 24th of March, 1455, Nicholas V. died the death of a true scholar, that is, after having pronounced a Latin oration to his Cardinals and friends, and was succeeded by Calixtus III, a Spaniard, and able jurist, who had first found his way to Italy as a political adventurer in the suite of Alphonso of Aragon. Calixtus was already seventy-seven years of age; he belonged to the corrupt Spanish clergy, not yet tamed and disciplined by the politic measures of Ferdinand and Isabella, and he bore the ill-omened name of Borgia; his brief Papacy was, like a meteor, the herald of coming evils He had no concern with codices and scholars. With a blind cupidity, unrestrained by any trace of decency or shame, he loaded with honours, land and gold those nephews, of whom one was destined later to assume the triple crown under the notorious name of Alexander VI. He filled the city with Spanish adventurers, entrusting them with all duties of administration and police, thereby causing an enormous increase of crime. Blood was shed on all sides; anarchy again threatened to rule in Rome, when old Calixtus died (6th August, 1458), whereupon a sudden burst of popular indignation put the Spaniards to flight, and the Pope's nephews themselves barely escaped with life.

Another scholarly Pope now ascended the throne, Enea Silvio Piccolomini, of Sienna, a man of varied and versatile talent and character. His early life was passed in pleasure, then amid the controversies at Basle, where he upheld that Council's authority in opposition to the Pope's; later, among the affairs of the imperial chancery in Germany, where he was the first to propagate Italian learning, he recanted his bold doctrines, renounced his juvenile errors, and thus was able to rise step by step in ecclesias-

tical rank until he reached the Papal Chair (19th August, 1458), and assumed the name of Pius II. He still continued to study and compose works of merit, but he did not patronize learned men, as all had hoped, employing himself instead in bestowing offices and patronage on his relations and his Siennese friends. Rome had once more fallen a prey to anarchy, in consequence of the mad policy of Calixtus III, who, although a creature of the Aragonese, had favoured the Angevins; but Pius II., with greater shrewdness, favoured the Aragonese, and thus, assisted by them, was able to conquer the rebels This Pope's ruling idea was that of a general crusade against the Turks; only as a man of his day, and a scholar, he was more stirred by rhetorical enthusiasm than by religious zeal. In Mantua, whither he invited all Christian princes to a solemn congress (1459), many Latin discourses were pronounced; but in point of fact this great meeting was a mere literary display, with many high sounding promises never destined to be carried into effect. Notwithstanding all this, the Pope wrote a Latin letter to Sultan Mahomet II expecting to convert him by that means And when, on the contrary, fresh Greek exiles were perpetually arriving, flying before the Turks, who had invaded the Morea, and Thomas Paleologus was the bearer of the head of St. Andrew, all Rome was, as it were, turned into a temple to receive the sacred relic, which was accompanied by thirty-five thousand torches. The Pope seized this occasion to deliver another solemn discourse in favour of a crusade, to a sceptical people, many of whom only felt an interest in the relic because it was brought by persons who spoke the language of Homer.

In 1462, Pius II had collected a large sum of money through the unexpected discovery of rich alum mines at Tolfa, and again took up the idea of a crusade, inviting all Christian princes to straightway set out for the East. Old and suffering as he was, he caused himself to be carried in a litter to Ancona, where he expected to find armies and fleets, intending to go with them and bestow his blessing on their arms, like Moses when Israel fought against Amalek. But he found the port entirely empty; and when at last a few Venetian galleys arrived, the Pope drew his last breath, gazing towards the East, and urging the pursuance of the crusade (15th August, 1464). His life, which to some may perhaps seem a worthy subject of romance, or even of epic narration, was in reality devoid of all true greatness. Pius II was a scholar of considerable talent, who wished to do some heroic deed, without possessing in himself the heroic element. Although, doubtless, the most noteworthy pontiff of this century, he had no deep convictions: he reflected the opinions and feeble

desires of the men among whom he lived, changing perpetually, according to the times and conditions in which he was placed. His reign seemed to have a certain splendour, to hold out many hopes, but he left nothing durable behind him. After popes who had established the temporal power by force, and popes who had caused art and letters to flourish in Rome; after Pius II. who had not only re-established order, but had even seemingly inaugurated a religious awakening, it might have been hoped that a better era of peaceful security was at hand. But it was now, on the contrary, that all passions ran riot, and the worst crimes, the most horrible obscenities of the Papacy, were near at hand.

Paul II., consecrated on the 16th of September, 1464, approached this period without beginning it, and we may say that he was better than his reputation. Yet he, too, careless of learning, was given up to the pleasures of life, and without being devoid of political qualities, considered it a part of the art of government to corrupt the people by festivities on which he squandered treasures. His name has come down to posterity with hatred, because he roughly expelled all the scholars of the Segreteria to make room for his own adherents. And when the learned world raised its voice still louder, and in the Roman Academy of Pomponio Leto, speeches were made recalling those of Cola dei Rienzo and Stefano Porcaro, he broke up the academy and imprisoned its members. It was then that Platina, confined and tortured in the Castle of St. Angelo, swore to have revenge, and obtained it by depicting his persecutor as a monster of cruelty in his "Lives of the Popes," a very widely known work. But Paul II., without being in the least a good Pope, was not without certain merits. He re-ordered justice, severely punishing the bravos who filled Rome with their crimes, he had a new compilation of Roman law drawn up, he fought energetically against the Malatesta of Rimini, and put down the arrogance of the Anguillara family, who owned a great part of the Campagna, and of the territory of St. Peter. Neither must his offences be too severely blamed when we remember the times and the men who came after him.

The three following Popes, Sixtus IV, Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI., are those filling the most degraded period in papal history, and proving to what a state Italy was then reduced. The first of these men was a Genoese friar, who immediate after his election (9th August, 1471) exhibited himself as a violent despot, devoid of all scruples and all decency. He needed money, and therefore put up to sale offices, benefices, and

indulgences He showed a downright mania for the advancement of his nephews, some of whom were, according to the general verdict, his own sons One of these, Pietro Riario, was made Cardinal, with an income of sixty thousand crowns, and plunged so desperately into luxury, dissipation, and debauchery of all kinds, that he soon died, worn out by his vices, and overwhelmed with debts. The other brother, Girolamo, as zealously patronized, led the same sort of life. The Pope's whole policy was ruled by his greed of fresh acquisitions for his sons and nephews. It was solely because Lorenzo dei Medici had crossed these designs that the conspiracy of the Pazzi was hatched in the Vatican, and that on its failure the Pope made war upon Florence, and launched a sentence of excommunication against that city. Later, he joined the Venetians in their expedition against Ferrara, always with the same object of snatching some province for his family. A general war was the result, in which even the Neapolitans took part, by making an attack upon Rome, where fresh feuds among the nobility quickly broke out. Roberto Malatesta, of Rimini, was summoned to the defence of the eternal city, and when he died of a low fever, contracted during the war, the Pope tried to recompense his services by despoiling his heir of his State. This design, however, the Florentines managed to defeat.

The Pope, perceiving his danger, now changed his policy, and joined the Neapolitans against Ferrara and the Venetians, since these latter seemed disposed to conduct the war solely for their own advantage He then began to revenge himself upon the nobles, especially the Colonna Girolamo Riario, the bloodthirsty, commanded the artillery,—which had been blessed by the Pope—gained possession of the Castle of Marino by promising to spare the life of his prisoner the Protonotary Lorenzo Colonna, and nevertheless caused his head to be cut off. During the funeral ceremony in the church of the Holy Apostles, the infuriated mother held her son's head up by the hair, and displaying it to the people, exclaimed, "Behold how the Pope keeps faith!" But these scenes of bloodshed in no wise disturbed the mind of Sixtus IV. When, however, he suddenly received intelligence that the Venetians whom he had abandoned, had, without consulting him or taking his concerns in account, concluded the peace of Bagnolo (7th August, 1484), he was seized with a violent attack of fever, and died (12th August, 1484), as men said, of the pains of peace

"Nulla vis saevum potuit extinguere Sixtum
Audito tantum nomine pacis, obit."[1]

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p. 70.

The palaces of the Riario were being sacked, the Orsini and the Colonna in arms, when the Cardinals hurriedly assembling in conclave, succeeded in patching up a truce. Then began a most scandalous traffic in votes for election to the Papal chair, which was sold to the highest bidder. The fortunate purchaser was Cardinal Cibo, who was proclaimed Pope on 29th August, 1484, under the name of Innocent VIII. Hostile to the Aragonese, he soon joined the conspiracy of the Neapolitan barons, promising men, arms, money, and the arrival of a new Angevin pretender. The city of Aquila began the rebellion by raising the standard of the Church (October, 1485); Florence and Milan declared for the Aragonese; Venice and Genoa, on the other hand, declared for the Pope and the barons, who had the aid of the Colonna, while the Orsini, taking up arms in the Campagna, marched straight to the walls of Rome. Confusion was at its height; the Pope despairing of succour, armed even the common felons; the Cardinals were at variance, the people terror-stricken, and Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere alone paced the walls, and prepared for their defence An attack was momentarily expected from the Duke of Calabria But the Pope's invitation to Renè II. of Lorraine had the effect of bringing about a peace, compelling Ferrante to pay an annual tribute, and grant an amnesty to the barons, who, however, were put to death shortly afterwards.

During all this confusion, anarchy had again broken loose in Rome, nor was any way found to restrain it: no morning passed without corpses being found in the streets. Malefactors who could pay, obtained safe conducts; those who could not were hung at Tor di Nona. Every crime had its price, and all sums over one hundred and fifty ducats went to Franceschetto Cibo, the Pope's son; smaller amounts to the Chamber. Parricide, violation, any sort of crime, could obtain absolution for money. The Vice-Chamberlain used to say laughing, "The Lord desireth not the death of the sinner, but his life and his purse." The houses of the Cardinals were crammed with weapons, and gave shelter to numerous assassins and malefactors Nor was the state of things in the country very different from this. At Forlì Girolamo Riario was assassinated (1484), men said, because the Pope wished to give that State to Franceschetto Cibo, at Faenza, Galeotto Manfredi was murdered by his own wife Dagger and poison were everywhere at work, the most diabolical passions were unchained in Italy, and Rome was the headquarters of crime.

Meanwhile, Innocent VIII passed his time in festivities. He was the first Pope who openly acknowledged his own children,

and celebrated their wedding feasts. Franceschetto espoused Maddalena, daughter of Lorenzo dei Medici (1487), and by way of recompense, her brother Giovanni was made a Cardinal at the age of fourteen. In the midst of these and other sumptuous family rejoicings, a singular personage arrived who completed the strange spectacle offered by Rome in those days. This was Djem, or as he was called by the Italians, Gemme, who had been defeated and put to flight in struggling against his brother Bajazet for the succession to the throne of Mahomet II. At Rhodes the knights of that order had made him prisoner, extorting from Bajazet thirty-five thousand ducats a-year, on condition of preventing his escape. Later, Pope Innocent contrived to get this rich prey into his own hands, and obtained forty thousand ducats yearly from Bajazet, who offered to pay a much larger sum on receipt of his brother's corpse, but this last arrangement did not suit the Pope's purpose. So on the 13th of March, 1489, Djem, seated motionless in his saddle, dressed in his native costume, and wrapped in his austere Oriental melancholy, made his solemn entrance into Rome, and was lodged in the Vatican, where he passed his time in studying music and poetry.

The taking of Granada, the last stronghold of the Moors in Spain, the arrival of holy relics from the East, all gave occasion for festivals, processions, and bacchanalian orgies. There was a very imposing ceremony on the arrival of the youthful Cardinal, Giovanni dei Medici, then only seventeen years of age, and to whom his father, among other useful advice, wrote that he must bear in mind that he was about to inhabit the sink of all iniquity. And this Rome certainly was. The Pope's sons and nephews made the town ring with the scandal of their daily life. Franceschetto Cibo lost fourteen thousand florins in a single night at play with Cardinal Riario, whom he accused to the Pope of cheating at cards; the money, however, had already disappeared. The Eternal City had become a great market of offices and posts, often only created in order to be sold. And not only offices, but false bulls, indulgences to sinners, impunity for assassins, could be had for money: a father, by payment of eight hundred ducats, obtained absolution for the murder of his two daughters. Every evening corpses found about the streets were thrown into the Tiber.

In the midst of these diabolical orgies, the Pope every now and then fell into a lethargy that was mistaken for death, and then his relations and the cardinals hurried to secure their treasures and the precious hostage Djem, and all Rome was in a tumult. The Pope would awake from his trance, and thereupon the

merry-makings went on as before, and assassination was the order of the day. At last a fresh attack of the Pope's malady left little room for hope. Anxious relations crowded round the bed of the dying man, who could take nothing but woman's milk; then, it was said, transfusion of blood was tried and three children sacrificed to the experiment.

But all was in vain, and on the 25th of July, 1492—the same year in which Lorenzo dei Medici had died—Innocent VIII. breathed his last at the age of sixty. At the death of Sixtus IV., Infessura had blessed the day that freed the world from so great a monster, and the following Pope was much worse than his predecessor. Nobody now believed that a worse than Innocent could be found, yet the infamy of the new Pope Alexander VI., caused that of his predecessors to be totally forgotten. Of this monster it will be time to speak in narrating the catastrophe, which, during his pontificate, and partly through his misdeeds, overwhelmed the whole of Italy.[1]

5. *Naples.*

The kingdom of Naples resembles a perpetually stormy sea, which becomes monotonous by the changeless uniformity of its motion. It is true that the Hohenstauffen period had been one of glory; but it closed with Manfred's noble death and the tragic end of Corradino (29th October, 1268), a drama of which the lugubrious echo resounds throughout the Middle Ages. The triumph of the Angevins, summoned across the Alps by the Popes—always the bitterest enemies of the mighty Frederic II. and his successors—was the beginning of endless calamities. The bad government of Charles I of Anjou soon drove the people to rebellion; in order to subdue them it was necessary to lean upon the barons, who, becoming exceedingly powerful, split up into factions, tore the miserable country to pieces, and were a powerful weapon in the hands of the Popes, who always hastened to call in a new pretender whenever they beheld any one prince becoming formidable. In this way they sought to acquire territory for their nephews, and maintain their pretended supremacy in the kingdom, which they devastated and plunged into anarchy with infinite harm to all Italy. Nevertheless they also had to pay the penalty of this iniquitous system of policy,

[1] For the history of Rome, besides older works, see Gregorovius's "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol vii, and Reumont's "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. iii, parts 1 and 2.

for the Roman nobles having extended their dominions down into the south, and being therefore subjects of two States, became a lever used by turns to the hurt of one or the other, with fatal results for both. Accordingly the whole kingdom of Naples was subjected to a process of dissolution. New pretenders arose every day, the people were always oppressed, the barons always in revolt, no institutions could acquire stability or firmness, no individual character could long succeed in dominating and guiding the rest

Under Joanna I, who had four husbands, and was murdered by suffocation under a feather bed, the kingdom had fallen into complete anarchy, and the Court turned into an assemblage of dissolute adventurers. Later King Ladislaus seemed about to initiate a new era. He had subjugated the barons, conquered internal enemies, placed a garrison in Rome itself, and was advancing at the head of a powerful army, after inspiring all men with the belief that he was willing and able to make himself king of all Italy, when he died suddenly at Perugia, as all believed of poison, in 1414 With Joanna II., the sister of Ladislaus, a fresh period of indecency and chaos began A widow, elderly, dissolute, the mistress of her own steward, she allowed the State to fall a prey to the nobility, mercenary leaders, and courtiers of the lowest stamp Martin V., who had had her crowned in 1419, sent the following year for Louis III. of Anjou to come and assert his claims to the throne. Joanna in her turn invited Alfonso of Aragon over from Spain and proclaimed him her successor, but shortly nominated in his stead René of Lorraine, who was supported by Pope Eugene IV. and the Duke of Milan. Then followed a long and ruinous war, which only came to an end when Alfonso of Aragon, after winning many battles, entered the capital by the aqueducts of the Capuan Gate on 2nd of June, 1442, and became at last master of the kingdom that he had conquered at the price of so long a war and such enormous efforts. This was the foundation of the Aragonese dynasty.

It is hardly necessary to say in what a miserable condition the State then was, and how universal was the desire for peace. Alfonso's triumph was hailed as the beginning of a new era. He had left Spain to come and carry on in our country an adventurous war, in which, after dangers and hardships of every description, he had conquered a vast kingdom, struggled with numerous foes, and defeated the first captains of the age. A stranger in Italy, he now ruled provinces which had been long harassed and domineered over by strangers. He had besides rapidly lost all foreign characteristics, and become in all things

similar to our princes, with the addition of a warlike and chivalric spirit that they very seldom possessed. He went about unarmed and unattended among his people, saying that a father should have no fear of his own children. His Court was crowded with learned men, and a thousand anecdotes are related in proof of his extraordinary admiration of ancient writers Happening to march with his army past a city, the birthplace of some Latin writer, he halted as before a sanctuary; he never made a journey without having a copy of Livy or Cæsar with him. His panegyrist Panormita pretended to have cured him of an illness, by reading to him a few pages of Quintus Curtius; Cosimo dei Medici had concluded a peace with him, by sending him one of Livy's codices. A warrior and a man of unprejudiced mind, he gave a welcome to all scholars who were persecuted elsewhere. This was the case with Valla when he had to fly from Rome on account of his pamphlet against the temporal power of the Popes; the same with Panormita when his "Ermafrodito," although much lauded for the facile elegance of its versification, excited scandal by an obscenity which had not yet become familiar to men of learning, and was publicly anathematized from the pulpit. These and many other *literati* were cordially received at the Neapolitan Court, and splendidly rewarded with large salaries, houses and villas.

Exalted to the skies by the learned, Alfonso gained the title of the Magnanimous through his generosity and knightly spirit. But as a statesman, as founder of a dynasty and pacificator of a kingdom, one cannot accord him much praise. After having ravaged the unfortunate southern provinces with war, he drained them by taxes levied to pay his soldiery and reward his adherents the nobles, whom he loaded with favours and rendered more tyrannical than they were before. Given up to the pleasures of life, he never succeeded, during the sixteen years of undisputed rule that remained to him, in founding anything durable, in doing anything to relieve the people from the depth of misery in which his wars had plunged them, or to secure his dynasty by the consolidation of the kingdom. Dying, 1458, at the age of sixty-three, he bequeathed his hereditary states in Spain together with Sicily and Sardinia to his brother; while the kingdom of Naples, fruit of his victories, he left to his natural son Ferdinand, whose maternal origin is involved in mystery.

Heir to a vast kingdom, conquered and pacified by his father, Ferdinand, or Ferrante as he was called, had a right to expect that he might quietly enjoy its possession; but, on the contrary, he was obliged to re-conquer it all again by force of arms, for the

latent disorder now quickly broke out. The first spark of discord was lit by Pope Calixtus, who owed everything to Alfonso, and had himself legitimized Ferrante's birth. But he now declared the Aragonese line extinct, and claimed the kingdom as a fief of the Church. The Angevin barons were in arms, René of Lorraine landed between the mouths of the Volturno and the Garigliano; revolutions broke out in Calabria and elsewhere. Yet, with enemies on all sides, Ferrante, by 1464, had succeeded in again subjugating the whole kingdom; and then, instead of establishing order, thought of nothing but revenging himself upon his foes. He was accustomed to destroy his enemies by treacherous means, and, with cynical cruelty, would embrace them, caress them, and entertain them gaily at dinner before sending them to their death. A man of remarkable ability, of great courage and political penetration, but full of vices and contradictions, he governed in a most ruinous manner, and even traded on his own account. He would collect a stock of merchandise and then forbid his subjects to sell theirs until he had disposed of his at his own price. All his transactions were based upon a false and artificial system, which ended by destroying the strength of the State, although the king had chosen very able men as ministers Of these the best known are his secretary, Antonello Petrucci, and Pontano, who, besides being one of the finest scholars of his age, was also a very acute diplomatist, and Ferrante's prime minister; it was he who conducted all affairs with the other Italian States, wrote all diplomatic despatches, and concluded all treaties. Francesco Coppola, the very rich and powerful Count of Sarno, carried on commercial operations in quest of money, unhampered by scruples of any sort. But these clever ministers were but the tools of the false policy of a crafty and ingenious tyrant, who looked upon his State and his people in the light of a property from which it was his duty to squeeze as much as possible during his life, and leave his heirs to take care of themselves. Then, too, his son Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, was prouder, more cruel, and more tyrannical than his father, without possessing either his ability or courage, and disgusted all who approached him When the Turks who were occupying Otranto, suddenly withdrew, on account of the death of Mahomet II, it appeared as though they were flying before Alfonso, the which so increased his pride and made him so much more unbearable, that Antonello Petrucci himself and the Count of Sarno, immeasurably disgusted, and foreseeing the evils that the character of the heir to the throne would bring about in the future, placed themselves at the head of the malcontents and

determined to attempt a revolt. Pope Innocent fanned the flame, and the result was that great conspiracy of the barons which set the kingdom of Naples ablaze and threatened to cause a general war throughout Italy (1485). Ferrante's craft and courage sufficed to calm even this tempest; he concluded a treaty of peace, and, as usual, succeeded in revenging himself upon his enemies. But his was a policy that could only be successful while it was a question of keeping under a turbulent and exhausted kingdom by still further exhausting it. When, however, dangers attacked it from abroad, matters were beyond remedy.

And such a danger was now at hand, for Charles VIII. of France was making preparations for the fatal expedition that was to herald the renewal of foreign descents upon the Peninsula. Ferrante, now an old man, quickly took alarm, and warned all the princes of Italy of the coming calamity, entreating them to unite for the common defence. The letters he wrote at that time have a painful tone, a passionate eloquence which seems to elevate and ennoble his mind, and an extraordinary political acumen that is almost prophetic.[1] He perceived and described to admiration all the calamities which awaited his country and the princes who, like himself, blinded by their own cunning, had rendered unavoidable the common misfortune. But it was already too late. Italy could not escape the abyss into which she was already falling. Ferrante had to go down to his grave with his conscience tortured beforehand by the fall of his kingdom and of his dynasty, a fall that was already seen to be inevitable when death closed his eyes on the 25th of January, 1494.

The whole lengthy drama that we have so far described is but a preparation for the coming catastrophe. And if we were to turn our attention from the greater to the minor States into which the Peninsula is divided, we should find at Ferrara, Faenza, Rimini, Urbino, everywhere, the same series of crimes, the same corruption. Indeed, the petty princes, exactly because they were weaker and involved in greater dangers, often perpetrated more numerous and grosser acts of cruelty in order to save their threatened power. Still, they never neglected the encouragement of literary culture, of the fine arts, of the most exquisite refinements of civil life, thus bringing out still more forcibly the singular contrast, that is one of the special characteristics of the Italian Renaissance, and one of the greatest difficulties it offers to our comprehension.

[1] *Vide* the "Codice Aragonese," published by Cav. Prof. F. Trinchon, Superintendent of the Archivi Napolitani, in three vols., Naples, 1865–74.

Many Italian writers, animated by a spirit of patriotism that is not always the most trustworthy guide in judging of historical facts, have tried to prove that the social and political condition of Italy in the fifteenth century was similar to that of the rest of Europe, and need, therefore, excite no astonishment. Louis XI., they remind us, was a monster of cruelty, and author of the most fraudulent intrigues; the poisonings of Richard III. are not unknown; Ferdinand the Catholic prided himself on having duped Louis XII. ten times; the great Captain Consalvo was a notorious perjurer, &c., &c.[1] It is but too true that the formation of the greater European States was accomplished by destroying local governments and institutions by treachery and violence; and, in these conditions of warfare, the blackest crimes and most atrocious acts of revenge everywhere took place; and although such deeds seem almost natural in the general barbarity of the Middle Ages, they appear utterly monstrous and unwarrantable amid the mental culture of the Renaissance. And in Italy such crimes were certainly less excusable than elsewhere, since there culture had reached a higher pitch, and the contradiction presented by this mixture of civilization and barbarism was more plainly evident.

Nor must it be forgotten that monarchs such as Louis XI. and Ferdinand the Catholic, notwithstanding their crimes, completed a national work, making of France and Spain two great and powerful nations, while our thousand-and-one tyrants always kept the country divided with the sole and personal object of maintaining themselves on their sorry thrones. And if the policy of the fifteenth century was everywhere bad, it must be acknowledged that it originated in Italy, who taught it to other nations, and the number who pursued it in Italy was infinitely greater than in any other country. At every step we come upon tyrants, faction-leaders, conspirators, politicians, diplomatists; indeed, every Italian seemed to be a politician and diplomatist even in his cradle. Thus corruption was more universal than elsewhere, spreading in wide circles from the government through society at large, and so it happened that this Italian policy which brought into action such prodigious intellectual forces, and produced so great a variety of characters, ended here in Italy by building only upon sand. It is true that, looking lower down in the social scale, we find the ties of kindred still respected,

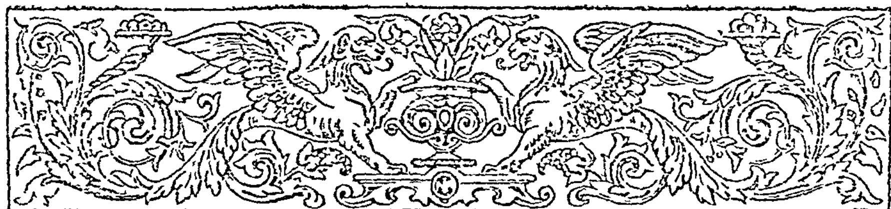
[1] "Considerazioni sul libro del Principe," added by Professor A. Zambelli to the volume containing "Il Principe i Discorsi di N. Machiavelli." Florence, Le Monnier, 1857.

ancient customs still preserved, and a far better moral atmosphere. And if we turn away from regions where, as in the case of Naples, Rome, and the Romagna, a continued series of revolutions had upset and thrown everything into confusion, we find in Tuscany, in Venetia, and elsewhere, a population far more civilized, milder, and more cultivated than in the remainder of Europe, and far fewer crimes committed. Historians, especially foreign ones, have never taken this fact into account, and, judging the whole nation by the higher classes, who were also the more corrupt, they have formed mistaken conclusions as to the moral condition of Italy, who would have fallen to an even lower depth, and could never have come to life again, had she been altogether as bad as they have described.

It must, however, be confessed that it was not merely because political life was reserved for the few in France, Spain, and Germany, that the corruption caused by it was less diffused. The reason lay deeper: in those countries there were institutions and traditions that still stood firm, opinions that were never discussed, authorities that were always respected. These naturally created a public strength and morality altogether wanting among ourselves, where all things were submitted to the minutest analysis by the restless Italian mind, which, in seeking the elements of a new world, destroyed that in which it existed. The Venetian and Florentine ambassadors at the Court of Charles VIII, or of Louis XII, appeared to turn everything into ridicule. They found the monarch without ability, the diplomatists untrained, administration confused, business conducted at hazard; but they were amazed by observing the immense authority enjoyed by the king. "When His Majesty moves," said they, "all men follow him." And in this consisted the great strength of the French nation. Guicciardini, in his despatches from Spain, plainly shows his hatred and contempt for that country, yet he cannot abstain from noticing that the personal interests of Ferdinand the Catholic being in agreement with the general interests of the nation, the royal policy derived enormous strength and value from that fact. The customs of Germany and Switzerland appeared to Machiavelli similar to those of the ancient Romans whom he so heartily admired. Had the disorder and moral corruption of other nations been altogether identical with that which one found in Italy, how could we interpret these judgments of highly competent men? How could it be explained that Italy was already decaying, even before being overrun by foreigners, while other nations were budding into new life? But, as we have before remarked, it is necessary to guard against all

exaggeration, or it would be impossible to understand the great vitality that the Italian nation undoubtedly possessed, and, above all, its marvellous progress in art and letters. It is to this latter subject that we will now turn.





III.

1. Petrarch and the Revival of Learning.[1]



NO great distance of time separates Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) from Francesco Petrarca (1304–74), but whoever studies their life and writings might almost believe them to belong to two different ages Dante's immortal works are the opening of a new era, but Dante still stands with one foot in the Middle Ages He has made himself "parte per se stesso," and has a supreme disdain for the bad and iniquitous company ("compagnia malvagia e scempia") that surrounds him,[2] but he is always a most

[1] Regarding Petrarch as a man of learning, our best sources of information are his own letters, well edited and annotated by Fracassetti—"Epistolæ de rebus familiaribus et variæ" · Florentiæ, Typis Felicis Le Monnier, 1859–63, 3 vols ; "Lettere Familiari e Varie" (translation, with notes), 5 vols · Florence, Le Monnier, 1863–64; and "Lettere Senili": Le Monnier, 1869–70. Besides this, a valuable study upon Petrarch is to be found in Dr. Georg Voigt's "Die Wiederbelebung des classischen Alterthums, oder das erste Jahrhundert des Humanismus": Berlin, Reimer, 1859. This work, and that of Burckhardt, "Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien," are of the greatest importance for the history of Italian learning Other interesting books on the same subject are: "Petrarque, Etude d'apres de nouveaux documents," par A Mézières: Paris, Didier, 1868; and the "Petrarka" of Ludwig Geiger: Leipzig, Duncher und Humblot, 1874 Professor Mézières makes much use of the letters published by Fracassetti, but hardly any of Voigt and Burckhardt's estimable works Geiger's work, on the other hand, is a synthesis of all that others had written before him, and was published on the occasion of the centenary celebrated in Arquà, the 18th of July, 1874, when two very interesting speeches, one by Carducci, the other by Aleardi, were also published. Of other recent works on Petrarch, such as that of De Sanctis ("Critical Essay on Petrarch," Naples, 1869), it is unnecessary to speak here, since they treat of the Italian poet, and not of the man of learning.

[2] "Paradiso," canto xvii. 61–63, 67–69.

energetic partisan, fighting sword in hand amid the Guelph and Ghibelline factions. The Empire that he desires and invokes is always the mediæval Empire, and he defends it with arguments borrowed from the scholastic philosophy, which even penetrates into his "Divine Comedy." Thus Dante's image remains as though hewn in marble by Michael Angelo, in the midst of the tumultuous passions of his age, against which he fights, but out of which he has not yet found escape. Petrarch, on the contrary, is of weaker mould, of less original poetical genius, is neither Guelph nor Ghibelline; he despises scholastic philosophy; feels that literature is becoming a new power in the world, and that he owes all his force to his own genius; he has almost forgotten the Middle Ages, and comes before us as the first modern writer. It is, however, singular to observe how together with all this he was an almost fanatical enthusiast for the Latin writers whom he studied and imitated all his life, neither imagining nor desiring anything better than the revival of their culture, their ideas, and even their policy The explanation of how these same continual efforts to return to the ancient world led instead to the discovery of a new is, as we have already remarked, the problem that has to be solved by the historian of the revival of learning in the fifteenth century. The singular phenomenon is already clearly visible in Petrarch, for in him we find the germ of the whole following century, and the many men of learning who succeed him seem only to take, each one of them, some one portion of the multiple work which he embraced in its entirety, excepting the study of Greek that he could only encourage by his advice. From his early youth Petrarch forsook law and scholastic philosophy for Cicero and Virgil, he travelled about the world, employed all his friends in obtaining ancient manuscripts for him, and formed a very valuable collection of them. He transcribed much with his own hand, sought out unknown or forgotten authors; but his special quest was for works of Cicero, who was his idol, of whom he discovered two orations at Liege, and some private letters at Verona[1] This was a great literary event, for the flowing and somewhat pompous eloquence of Cicero became the constant

[1] It is known that Petrarch believed that he had once possessed Cicero's "De Gloria," and then lost it through lending it to his master, who, pressed by poverty, sold it, to Petrarch's life-long regret. Voigt, in his "Wiederbelebung," pp 25, 26, expresses his belief that Petrarch was mistaken upon this point. The volume he had lent contained many treatises; it is possible, therefore, says Voigt, that the title "De Gloria" was given by the copyists, as often happened, to one or more chapters of some other work—the "Tusculanæ," for instance This is the learned writer's hypothesis, and is founded on the observation that Petrarch lent the work when very young, at a time when he knew but little of Cicero's writings,

model of Petrarch and other learned men, and his epistles were in especial favour as being the most diffuse form of literary composition. The letters of Petrarch inaugurate the long series, they form his best biography, and are a literary and historical monument of sovereign importance. They are addressed to his friends, to princes, to posterity, to the great writers of antiquity. Every affection, every thought, finds a place in them; and the author exercises himself, under Cicero's faithful guidance, in every literary style. History, archæology, philosophy, are all treated of in these letters, which thus, on the one hand, form an encyclopedic manual admirably fitted for the collection and diffusion of a new culture, too young to support as yet a more scientific treatment. On the other hand, the author displays his own intellect in these letters, gives free vent to his affections, describes people and princes, different characters, and different lands. In Petrarch, the scholar and the practical observer of reality are united; indeed, we can discern how one was born of the other, and how antiquity, leading the man of the Middle Ages by the hand, guides him from mysticism to reality, from the city of God to that of men, and helps him to acquire independence of mind.

If, however, we examine the form of these epistles of Petrarch, we find that his Latinity is often both inelegant and incorrect; no one would dare to place it on a level with that of the classic writers, and it is inferior to that used later by Poliziano, Fracastoro, and Sannazzaro. We must compare it with that of the Middle Ages to see the immense stride that he has made, and the superiority of his Latin even to that of Dante. But Petrarch's highest merit by no means consists in this new classic elegance; it consists in the fact that he was the first to write freely of all things in the same way that a man speaks. He was the first to throw aside all scholastic crutches, and prove how much more swiftly a man could walk without leaning upon them. Sometimes a little too proud of this, he occasionally abuses his facility, falls into artifices that are mere *tours de force*, or allows himself to chatter like a child who, having made the discovery that his tongue can express his thoughts, goes on talking even when he has nothing more to say.[1]

Petrarch, in short, broke through the mediæval meshes, in which man's intellect was still entangled, and by means of his new

and that later he was never able to make any exact statements about that work. If ever really possessed by Petrarch, concludes Voigt, it is hardly credible that, even if missing for a time, it should have been lost for ever.

[1] Voigt makes this comparison.

style showed the way to treat of all subjects in a clear and spontaneous manner. In reading his epistles, we are often amazed by the fervour of his almost Pagan love of glory. It sometimes seems to be the principal motive of his actions, the scope of existence substituted by him for the ancient Christian ideal. Dante had already learned from Brunetto Latini how man may make himself eternal; but although in his "Inferno" the condemned think much of their earthly glory, in the "Purgatorio" there is far less anxiety about it; we are told that Oderisi da Gubbio was punished "*per lo gran desio dell' eccellenza*,"[1] and it disappears entirely in the "Paradiso," where the things of earth are almost forgotten. The Middle Ages sought for eternity in another world, the Renaissance sought it in this, and Petrarch had already embraced this new order of ideas. In his opinion, it was the desire for glory that inspired all eloquence, all magnanimous enterprises, all virtuous deeds; and he was never weary of seeking glory, was never satiated with it, although no man ever attained to so much during his life. The rulers of the Florentine republic wrote to him "obsequiously and reverently" (*ossequenti e riverenti*), as to one "whose equal the past knew not, nor would future ages know."[2] Popes and cardinals, kings and princes, alike deemed it an honour to have him for their guest[3] A tottering old man, deprived of sight, traversed the whole of Italy, leaning on one of his sons and one of his pupils, in order to embrace the knees of the immortal man and print a kiss upon the brow that had conceived so many sublime things; and it is Petrarch himself who tells us this with great satisfaction.[4] The day on which he received the poet's crown on the Capitol (8th April, 1341) was the most solemn and happiest of his life: "not so much on my own account," he says, "as an incitement to others to attain excellence"

This sentiment becomes sometimes, as it were, the familiar spirit (or Daemon) of the Renaissance. Cola de' Rienzo, Stefano Porcaro, Girolamo Olgiati, and many others, were less stirred by a veritable love of liberty than by a wish to emulate Brutus. At the scaffold's foot, it was no longer the faith in another world, but only the hope of glory in this, which gave them courage to meet death. And Machiavelli expresses the ideas of his age, when he

[1] "For his great desire of excellence."

[2] "Lettere Familiari," Italian edition *Vide* note to the fifth letter of the eleventh book. Petrarch received the invitation on 6th April, 1351. *Nota bene* that we always quote from Fracassetti's edition of Petrarch's letters

[3] "*Et ita cum quibusdam fui, ut ipsi quodammodo mecum essent*," he himself says in his Letter *ad Posteros* "Fam et Variæ," Latin edition, vol. i. p. 3.

[4] "Lettere Senili," bk xvi ep 7, vol ii pp 505-507.

says that men, if unable to obtain glory by praiseworthy deeds, seek it by vile, since to make their names live after them is their sole desire.[1]

All things tend to urge Petrarch, and after him, his contemporaries and successors, towards the world of reality; he has a great passion for travelling, on purpose to see, and describe what he sees: *multa videndi amor ac studium.*[2]

He goes to Paris, to ascertain the truth of the marvels told of that city; at Naples he visits in detail the enchanting environs, with the Æneid as his guide. He seeks out the lakes of Avernus, Acheron, and Lucrinus, the Sybil's cavern, Baiæ and Pozzuoli, and describes everything minutely, equally delighted with their natural beauties and classic memories.[3] Virgil had been Dante's guide in the three kingdoms of the unseen world; Virgil is Petrarch's guide in the study of nature. A fearful storm breaks over the bay one night, and he leaps from his bed; goes all over the city and down to the beach; watches the shipwrecks; observes the sea, the sky, and all the other phenomena; strolls into the churches among the praying people, and then writes one of the most celebrated of his letters.[4] All this has no longer any novelty for us, born amid modern realism; but we must remember that Petrarch was the first to quit the mysticism of the Middle Ages, and in order to quit it, was obliged to don a Roman toga.

Dante it is true sometimes describes nature with a few marvellous touches, but all such descriptive bits are used by him as comparisons and accessories the better to bring his ideas and his personages into relief; Petrarch was the first writer to give to nature a value of her own, as in the pictures of the masters of the fifteenth century. In his descriptions of character there is a downright realism that recalls the portraits painted in later years by Masaccio, Lippi, and Mino da Fiesole. We find him drawing and colouring the truth just as it is, and because of its truth, without any other object. He is told of a certain Maria of Pozzuoli, a woman of enormous strength, who lives always armed, and is carrying on a hereditary feud, and he makes a journey on purpose to see her, speak with her, and describe her.[5]

He gives a lively description of the dissolute licence of the Court of Joanna I., and of the sway exercised over it by the Franciscan friar Robert of Hungary—"Of low stature, bald, red-faced; with swollen legs; rotten with vice; leaning bent upon

[1] "Opere," vol. i., proem to the "Storie," p. clv.
[2] "Epistola ad Posteros," at the beginning of the "Familiares."
[3] "Lettere Familiari," book v. ep. 4.
[4] Ibid, book v. ep 5.
[5] Ibid., book v. ep. 4.

his staff from hypocrisy rather than infirmity: dressed in a filthy frock, which leaves half his person uncovered, in order to feign poverty; that man strides through the palace with an air of command, despising all men, trampling justice under foot, contaminating all things. Almost like a new Tiphys or Palinurus, he steers through the tempest this vessel that must speedily sink."[1]

Elsewhere he brings before us with singular graphic power the stern figure of Stefano Colonna, saying, that, "although old age had somewhat cooled the spirit in his fierce breast, yet even when seeking peace, he always finds war, since he would rather go down to the tomb fighting than bend his unconquered head."[2] These plain and speaking outlines, intermingled with continual quotations from the classics, and almost with fragments of antiquity, gain even greater force by the contrast, and make us see with our own eyes, touch with our own hands, the new world that is being born of the revival of the old.

If, too, we seek in Petrarch no longer the man of letters but the individual, then we find that, in spite of his own goodness and sincere admiration for virtue in others, there was already apparent in him that weak changeableness of character, that excitable vanity, that attributing to words almost the same importance as to facts and actions, which subsequently formed the usual temper of the learned men of the fifteenth century. He is one of those who have most loudly extolled friendship, pouring out treasures of affection in his letters to his friends; but it would not be easy to find in his life any example of a deep and ideal friendship, such as that, for instance, manifested in Dante's expressions about Guido Cavalcanti. A great deal of this expansive affection of his vented itself in the literary exercise to which it gave rise. Some may think that this was contradicted by Petrarch's constant passion for Madonna Laura, who inspired him with those immoral verses, which, in spite of his own contempt for them, form his greatest glory. It is certain that in his "Canzoniere," we find the truest, most refined analysis of the human heart, a diction free from all antiquated forms—even more modern than the language of many writers of the Cinquecento—and so transparent that the writer's thoughts shine through it, as through purest crystal. It is certainly impossible to doubt the existence of true and sincere passion; but this Canon who proclaims his love to all the winds of heaven, publishes a sonnet for every sigh, tells all the world how great is his despair if his Laura will not look upon him, and all

[1] "Lettere Familiari," book v. ep. 3. Fracassetti gives this letter the date of 23rd November, 1343.
[2] "Lettere Familiari," book viii. ep. 1.

the time is making love to another woman, to whom he addresses no sonnets, but by whom he has several children—how can he make men believe that his passion is really as he describes it, eternal, pure, and sole ruler of his thoughts?[1]

And here again the noble figure of Dante shines before us with increased brightness; Dante, who concealed himself lest other men should guess the secret of his love, and who only wrote when his passion, having mastered his strength, burst from his lips, in the shape of immortal verse. Yet Dante's Beatrice is ever wrapped in an ethereal veil of mysticism, and finally transfigured into theology, is removed even farther from us; Petrarch's Laura, on the contrary, is always a real woman of flesh and blood; we see her close to us, her voluptuous glances fascinate the poet, and even in his moments of greatest exaltation, he remains of the earth, earthly.

In his political career too, Petrarch's mutability—to call it by no harsher name—is also plainly apparent. He was a friend of the Colonna, to whom he professed to owe everything, "body, soul, fortune,"[2] and by whom he was beloved as a son, and received as a brother, yet after he had overwhelmed them with exaggerated praises, he forsook them in the moment of their peril. In fact, when Cola dei Rienzo began the extermination of that family in Rome, Petrarch, who entertained a boundless admiration for the classical Tribune, encouraged him to persevere in the destruction of the nobility: "Towards them every severity

[1] Prof. Mézières, in the fourth chapter of his work on Petrarch, relates how the poet began to love Laura in 1330, that she was the wife of Hugh de Sade since 1325, and died in 1348, leaving a large family. In 1331, according to Mézières, Petrarch's passion was very strong, and continued the same until after Laura's death. Then the French biographer, obliged to admit that Petrarch, Canon of Lombez, and Archdeacon of Parma, did not content himself with this species of affection, but at the same time loved another woman by whom he had a son in 1337, and a daughter in 1343, makes the following remarks:—"Ce n'est pas *une des particularités les moins curieuses* de son amour pour Laure qu'au moment où il éprouvait pour elle une passion si vive, il fût capable de chercher ailleurs ces plaisirs des sens qu'elle lui refusait obstinément. C'ést une histoire analogue à celle d'un grand écrivain de nôtre siècle, qui au sortir du salon d'une femme célèbre où il était réduit, malgré lui, à aimer platoniquement, se dedommageait dans des amours plus faciles, des privations qu'il subissait auprès de sa maitresse" (p. 153). But it is by such *particularités curieuses* that one judges a man's character; and Prof. Mézières, who wished to prove the seriousness and depth of Petrarch's love, and of his general character, would have done better to refrain from alluding to Chateaubriand, whose character showed much frivolity and inconsistency.

[2] "Lettere Senili," book xvi. ep. 1. See also "Lettere Familiari," book v. ep. 3; book vii. ep. 13; book xiii. ep. 6; "Epist. ad Posteros," and in the Italian edition of the "Lettere Familiari" the two notes to the 1st and 12th epistles in book viii.

is a religious duty, all pity an inhumanity. Pursue them sword in hand, even could you only overtake them in hell itself"[1] But this did not prevent him from writing, almost at the same moment, pompous letters of condolence to Cardinal Colonna: "Though your house have lost a few of its columns, what matters it! It will ever have in thee a solid foundation. Julius Cæsar was one man, yet sufficient for all"[2] Later on he again considered the Colonna as Massimi and Metelli,[3] but he did not therefore refrain from calling the Tribune to account for his weakness in not having rid himself of his enemies when able to do so[4] It is true that he tried to excuse himself by saying that he did not fail in gratitude; *sed carior Respublica, carior Roma, carior Italia.*[5] But what prevented him from keeping silence? And yet this very republican, so ardent an admirer of the third Brutus, "who unites in himself, and surpasses the glory of his two predecessors,"[6] shortly afterwards entreated the Emperor Charles IV. to come into Italy, saying that: "Italy invokes her spouse, her liberator, and waits impatiently to see his first footstep printed on her soil,[7] and who before had chosen even Robert of Naples as the subject of his praise, declaring that monarchy alone could save Italy.[8] It is also well known how many reproofs he addressed to the Popes for leaving Rome, which could not exist without them.

We cannot judge Petrarch otherwise than leniently when we see that he himself was unaware of these contradictions, because in point of fact all these speeches of his were nothing but literary exercises, never the expression of a sincere and profound political passion desirous to translate itself into action. Given a subject, his pen ran most swiftly in Cicero's track, and followed the harmonious cadence of his periods. But—and here we again meet with Petrarch's most original characteristic—in treating of either republic, monarchy, or empire, he never speaks as a Florentine, always as an Italian. It is true that the Italy of his desire is often to be confounded with the ancient Rome that he yearns to revive, but for that very reason he is the first to see in his learned

[1] "Epistolæ de rebus famil et variæ," vol iii. ep 48, pp 422–32. This epistle is addressed to Cola dei Rienzo and the Roman people.

[2] "Lettere Familiari," book viii. ep. 1.

[3] Ibid., book viii. ep. 1.

[4] Ibid., book xiii ep 6

[5] Ibid., book xi. ep. 16.

[6] "Epistolæ de rebus famil. et variæ," vol. iii. ep 48, pp 422–32.

[7] "Lettere Familiari," book xii ep 1, 24th February, 1350.

[8] "Epist. de rebus famil. et variæ," book iii ep 7: "Monarchiam esse optimam relegendis, reparandisque viribus Italis, quas longus bellorum civilium sparsit furor. Haec ut ego novi, fateorque regium manum nostris moribus necessariam, etc." This was written in 1339 according to Fracassetti. See his note in the Italian edition.

dreams the unity of the State and of the country. Dante's Italy is always mediæval; Petrarch's, although majestically enfolded in the toga of the Scipios, and the Gracchi, is nevertheless a united and modern Italy. Thus in this, as in all else, we see that our author was even here a true representative of his times: in endeavouring to return to the past, he opened a new future. He seems always old, and is ever new; but we must never forget that the primary source of his inspiration is a literary one, otherwise we shall be led into continual mistakes and unjust judgments.

Petrarch is a fierce assailant of jurisprudence, medicine, philosophy, of all the sciences of his day, because they do not fulfil their promises, but rather keep the mind enchained amid a thousand sophistries. His writings are often directed against scholastic philosophy, alchemy, astrology, and he is also the first who dared openly to revolt against the unlimited authority of Aristotle, the idol of the Middle Ages. All this does the greatest honour to the good sense, that raised him above the prejudices of his day. But it would be a gross error to seek to find in him a daring scientific innovator. Petrarch does not fight in the name of a new principle or new method, but in the name of beauty of form and of true eloquence, which he cannot find in those sciences, and cannot discover in the ill-translated and mutilated Aristotle of his times. Scholastic philosophy and its barbarous phraseology were incorporated in all the knowledge of the Middle Ages; and this barbarous phraseology was the enemy Petrarch fought against in all branches of learning The Italian Renaissance was a revolution brought about in the human mind, and in culture by the study of beauty of form inspired by the ancient classics. This revolution and all the perils occasioned by starting from form to arrive at substance are clearly and strikingly manifested in the writings of Petrarch, the man of learning, who has therefore been styled by some, not merely the precursor, but the prophet of the following century.

2. Learned Men in Florence.[1]

The work initiated by Petrarch speedily found a very large number of followers in Florence, and thence spread rapidly throughout Italy. In Florence, however, it was the natural out-

[1] One of the most important works on the history of the learned men is the "Vite di uomini illustri del secolo," xv., written by Vespasiano Bisticci, published for the first time by Mai, and then by Professor Adolfo Bartoli, Florence, Barbèra, 1859. Bisticci, although a most valuable authority for the width and certainty of

come of the political and social conditions of a people, in whose midst even the learned of other provinces came to perfect themselves in their studies, and gained, as it were, a second citizenship. In our histories of literature, which are frequently too full of biographical anecdotes and external facts, the names of these scholars are given in a mass, so that they all seem to be first-rate men, to have the same physiognomy and the same merits, and to hold the same object in view. To us, however, it is only important to know those who showed true originality amid the thousand others already fallen or now falling into deserved oblivion, who with feverish activity repeated the same things over and over again. Our object is not to give a catalogue of the learned men and their writings, but to study the literary and intellectual transformation that their work brought about in Italy.

The first learned men who offer themselves to our notice are friends, pupils, or copyists of Petrarch. Boccaccio was one of his most diligent assistants, as a collector of numerous codices, an admirer and imitator of the Latin classics, and as promoter of the study of the Greek tongue, of which he was one of the first students. The works which were fruits of his learning are however lacking in true originality. His Latin writings on the "Genealogy of the Gods," on "Illustrious Women," on the "Nomenclature of Mountains, Forests, and Lakes," &c, are little else than a vast collection of antique fragments, without much philological or philosophical value. But his mind was saturated with the spirit of antiquity in so great a degree, that it shows itself in all his works, even in those written in Italian. In fact, his Italian prose shows too great an imitation of the Ciceronian period, and seems to intimate that the triumph of Latin will soon be universal.

After two men like Petrarch and Boccaccio had once started upon this road, Florence appeared suddenly tranformed into

his information, must, however, be examined with caution, on account of his excessive ingenuousness and want of critical faculty. His statistics are not trustworthy, and he seldom troubles himself to give dates. Tiraboschi's "Storia della Litteratura Italiana" (Florence, Molini, Landi and Co., 1805-13) contains a truly precious harvest of facts regarding the learned men. Voigt and Burckhardt, frequently quoted, offer important remarks Nothing, however, but an examination of the works of the learned men allow us to form an exact judgment of their respective value. Nisard's work, "Les Gladiateurs de la République des lettres aux, XV^me, XVI^me, XVII^me siécles" (Paris, Levy, 1860), contains, notwithstanding the oddity of its title, very valuable observations. A vast miscellany of notices is to be found in the "Epistolæ" of Ambrozio Traversari, published by Mehus, with a memoir of the author; the numerous biographies written by Carlo de Rosmini are very useful also, not as criticisms, but for exactness of facts. Other special works will be mentioned in the proper place.

a hive of learned men. Learned meetings and discussions were held on all sides, in palaces, convents, villas,[1] among wealthy people, tradesmen, statesmen: all wrote, travelled, sent messengers about the world to discover, buy, or copy ancient manuscripts. All this did not result as yet in any original work; but an enormous mass of material was collected, and the necessary means prepared for a thorough revolution in the field of letters. The importance of this activity did not consist in the immediate results obtained, but in the energy and power in this wise employed and developed. The city of art and trade associations had now become the centre of literary associations. The first of these reunions was held in the convent of Santo Spirito, by Luigi Marsigli or Marsili, an Augustine friar and doctor of Theology, who lived in the second half of the fourteenth century. He had been the friend of Petrarch, was a man of mediocre ability, but to a great admiration for the ancients, he united an extraordinary memory, that gave him much aptitude for learned conversation; and for a long period Florentine scholars mentioned in their letters the profit derived from those discussions. The commentary written by Marsigli on Petrarch's "Ode to Italy," shows that he had not yet quite cut himself loose from the literature of the thirteenth century.[2] The two most noted frequenters of his cell,[3] Coluccio Salutati and Niccolo Niccoli,[4] had, however, already entered on the new path. Salutati, born in the Val di Nievole in the year 1330, was also the friend and admirer of Petrarch, an earnest promoter of erudition, and a great collector of codices. He was the author of numerous Latin orations, dissertations, and treatises, and in consequence received from Filippo Villani, as a title of honour, the name of "real aper of Cicero." But his

[1] Many notices on this head are collected in the volume divided into two parts, which Alessandro Wesselofsky has added to his edition of the "Paradiso degli Alberti" *Vide* "Il Paradiso degli Alberti, ritrovi e ragionamenti del 1389, romanzo di Giovanni da Prato," edited by Alessandro Wesselofsky: Bologna, Romagnoli, 1867. These meetings took place now in the house of Coluccio Salutati, now at the Paradiso, a villa belonging to Antonio degli Alberti, outside the San Niccolò Gate.

[2] "Comento a una canzone di Francesco Petrarca," by Luigi Marsili: Bologna, Romagnoli, 1863 Wesselofsky has been one of the first to remark that there was a period of transition between the "Trecentisti" and the learned men.

[3] Voigt, at p. 115, also mentions Gianozzo Manetti as one who frequented these reunions; but it is a mistake. Luigi Marsigli was born about 1330, and died on the 21st of August, 1394 (Tiraboschi, vol. v. p 171. Florence, Molini, Landi and Co., 1805–13). Manetti was born in 1396 (Tiraboschi, vol. vi. p 773), and belongs to a later generation. The origin of this mistake is, because after Marsigli's death, Vangelista da Pisa and Girolamo da Napoli taught at St. Spirito, and Manetti studied under them.

[4] Also known as Lino, Niccoluccio, Niccolino.

perial troops made a breach in the wall of the park where the French were encamped, Guicciardini says that it was opened by *masons, and likewise with the aid of the soldiery, who threw down sixty "braccia"* (*i.e.*, thirty ells) *of the wall.* The same phrase is to be found in Capella: "Per fabros lapidarios, *militum etiam auxilio, sexaginta muri passus tanto silentio prostravit.*" Professor Ranke cites this as a proof that Guicciardini not only copied, but copied without reflection, since battering rams, he observes, did more than masons in demolishing the wall, as Guicciardini must have certainly known. Therefore, if that writer copied even blunders regarding facts which must have been well known to him, what are we to think of facts of which he could have no personal knowledge?

It may be replied that Guicciardini would have been decidedly more exact had he said *sappers* and soldiers instead of masons and soldiers. But at a time when scrupulous modern exactitude was unknown, thousands of similar blunders may be detected in historians of the greatest weight when writing either of matters learnt from others or within their own knowledge. Their merit never consisted in minute exactness, but in their intelligent and truthful reproduction of essential facts and particulars.

At first Professor Ranke believed that, in treating of Florentine events, especially on the coming of Charles VIII. and the subsequent changes in the city, Guicciardini had relied on Bernardo Rucellai's "De bello Italico," and taken from that work even Piero Capponi's retort to Charles, only altering it somewhat and rendering it less probable But in the second edition of his book, Ranke notes that the phrase, "You will sound your trumpets, and we will ring our bells," is also found in Guicciardini's "Storia Fiorentina," produced at an earlier date, *i e*, in 1500. So this is an implicit acknowledgment that, at least, his remarks as to the source of the famous retort have lost most of their value. Nevertheless, he repeats that Guicciardini made no little use of Rucellai's work for his "Storia d'Italia," but the instances he gives merely prove, on the contrary, that the alleged imitation was so slight as scarcely to merit that name. Certain expressions, certain judgments on the coming of Charles VIII., the policy of Lorenzo dei Medici, and similar points, are common to all the Florentine historians of the time, are indeed almost traditional, and it would be extremely hard to decide who was the first to utter them The truth is that Guicciardini made use of many more authors than Professor Ranke supposed. This can now be proved with certainty, and with equal certainty that he likewise made use of an enormous number of original documents, studying them with patient and untiring accuracy, although this too was denied by the German critic.

The archives of the Guicciardini house not only contain several manuscripts of the "History" copied, corrected, and repeatedly revised, with many long passages cancelled and re-written, but also four volumes of "Historical Memoirs" ("Memorie Storiche"). These contain the materials for the "History," and clearly show us how it was composed. Like Machiavelli and many other of the best Florentine historians of the time, when engaged in chronicling contemporary events, Guicciardini chiefly based his narrative upon the letters of ambassadors and commissioners to the Signory and the Ten.[1] Numerous extracts from this correspondence are given in the "Historical Memoirs," and then afterwards re-copied and arranged according to their subjects and dates, and continually accompanied by marginal notes of accounts of the same events as given by other historians. There are frequent summaries derived from Capella, Mocenigo, Giovio, Bartolini Salim-

[1] There are extracts from the letters of M. A. Niccolini, orator at Milan (1492), of Piero Guicciardini, orator at Milan (1493), of the Commissioners at Pisa (1494), of G. B. Ridolfi, orator at Milan (1495), of Antonio di Pazzi, orator at Rome (1497), of Becchi, orator at Rome (1496), of Bracci, orator at Rome (1497). These are the first extracts at the beginning of vol. i., and they are carried on throughout the four volumes. Some are written in Guicciardini's hand; many others copied by a different pen.

d'Italia," vol. vii. bk. xiv. pp. 14–16.) All this clearly shows that he had designedly refrained, in writing to Cardinal dei Medici, from dwelling much on the ease with which he could have kept the General in custody. But excepting the latter's alarm on being forsaken by his men, and the circumstance of his being first sheltered and then liberated by Guicciardini, the rest of the account in the letter is identical with that given in the "History": namely, of the resistance made by the citizens, the shots fired by them at the General's escort, which killed two men on the spot, and fatally wounded a third. Accordingly the letter proves another omission of a detail given in the "History." This may lead to more or less justifiable suppositions, but does not imply that the letter proves the falsity of the narrative contained in the "History," especially when we remember that the silence of the letter on one detail of the incident is easily explained by reference to the "History."

Professor Ranke also inquires into the authorities used by Guicciardini. This is an investigation of great importance, and the only basis for a genuine criticism of the "Storia d'Italia." But it should be a most thorough investigation, deciding, as far as possible, what these authorities were, judging what was their intrinsic and comparative value, and noting to what extent and in what way Guicciardini made use of them. But to arrive at any certainty on these points necessitates an examination of the author's original manuscripts. From this examination and careful comparison of the "History" with the "Legations," and with the letters contained in the "Opere Inedite," we gain clear proofs of Guicciardini's intrinsic merit, wide research, and great accuracy. Indeed, in these respects we believe that he must always be considered the foremost historian of his time. But although Professor Ranke has the merit of having initiated the study of Guicciardini's authorities, he began the task before the "Opere Inedite" were published, and when it was difficult and perhaps impossible to gain access to the original manuscripts. Therefore, his researches, while indicating the new path to be followed, could not be carried out with the desired thoroughness. He perceived that one of Guicciardini's sources was a history by Galeazzo Capra, surnamed Capella ("Commentarii de rebus gestis pro restitutione Ducis Mediolanensis"). This writer had been secretary to Morone and Francesco II., Sforza, had seen many documents, had dealings with many men; was therefore likely to have had intimate acquaintance with the facts he narrated. This history, running from 1521 to 1530, went through eleven Latin editions between 1531 and 1542, and was quickly translated into Italian, German, and Spanish. Guicciardini undoubtedly made much use of it for the fourteenth and following books of his "History."

But to attribute too much importance to this fact, and believe, as Professor Ranke believes, that Guicciardini was a plagiarist, simply because he does not name the source he relies upon, seems to us grossly unjust, not merely because this exaggerates the extent to which Guicciardini makes use of Capella, but also because this leaves out of consideration the general custom, at that day, of never citing the authorities referred to. What, then, could be said of Machiavelli and all the other historians of the Cinquecento who were guilty of the same faults and to even a greater extent? Not one of them would escape with his fame intact. Professor Ranke gives high praise to Nardi. Yet no one has copied more than Nardi, who, in his "Storia di Firenze," appropriated the whole of Buonaccorsi's "Diario," only once giving him his due, and even then omitting to state that he had literally copied his words. It was not the custom in those days to recast what was considered to be good as it stood, and the histories of that period give no notes, whereas ours are loaded with them.

Considering, therefore, the prevalence of the custom, it is an excess of severity to harp upon certain secondary resemblances in order to prove Guicciardini guilty of plagiarism. In describing how, the night before the battle of Pavia, the im-

Florence, omits all mention of the first, but minutely records the second speech as having a more general importance, and includes nothing but what Soderini really said. Accordingly he is more faithful and exact than Nerli, and the latter's praise was therefore well merited. In book viii. of his "History" (vol iv. p. 45), Guicciardini gives another speech, delivered by the Venetian Ambassador, Antonio Giustinian, in the year 1509, and says that it is faithfully rendered from the Latin original. Professor Ranke maintains that this discourse can be only a literary composition of a later date, because Giustinian's embassy never took place, and the letter of credentials from the Venetian republic, conceived in far more dignified terms than those attributed to Giustinian, was afterwards discovered in the possession of the latter's descendants. The truth is that the mission could not be accomplished, because the ambassador was not received; but the discourse was certainly written at the time, and then held to be authentic. A copy of it is to be found in the "Machiavelli Papers" ("Carte del Machiavelli"), and proves that Guicciardini's translation of it was thoroughly faithful. Ricci transcribed it in his "Prioiista," and defended its authenticity against Venetian writers, who, from patriotic motives, cast doubts on that point. The Florentine Ambassador at Rome sent a copy of it to the Signory with a letter of the 7th of July, 1509. Machiavelli makes a sufficiently plain allusion to it in his "Discorsi" (bk. iii. chap. iii). It had been already printed in Naples, before being translated by Guicciardini [1]

Guicciardini's nephew furnished all the information in his power concerning his uncle's manuscripts, when he affirmed that Guicciardini gave much care to the examination of treaties. This Professor Ranke is unwilling to believe, and tries to justify his doubts by recalling what Guicciardini says of a treaty with which he should have been well acquainted, namely, that concluded by the Florentines with Cordona in 1512. It was published by Fabroni in his "Vita di Leone X," and does not in the least correspond with Guicciardini's account of it. According to him, Florence had joined the League and entered into an offensive and defensive alliance with Spain Now, Ranke continues, the treaty neither mentions the League, nor mentions an unconditional alliance with the King of Spain; it only states that the Florentines pledged their word to defend the Neapolitan territory for three years and six months. It does not state that they pledged themselves to pay the Viceroy the sums promised him by the Medici, as Guicciardini affirms. And even what the latter says of the two hundred Neapolitan spearmen given to the service of the Florentines, and of the restitution of the Medici's possessions, is only true in part. Therefore—according to Professor Ranke—Guicciardini has favoured us with an imaginary treaty, that while truly corresponding with what really happened, did not so correspond with the far more honourable terms stipulated by the Florentines, and which were not respected. But in the "Storia d'Italia" two totally separate cases are described, which are massed together by Professor Ranke, and hence the confusion The Florentines, as we read in the "History," joined the League and bound themselves to acquit the obligations contracted by the Medici, by paying forty thousand ducats to the king of the Romans, eighty thousand to the Viceroy for the army, and twenty thousand for himself, *i e*, a total of one hundred and forty thousand ducats. These sums were actually paid, and are mentioned by many other writers, including even Vettori, who adds that the said sums had been promised and voted by the Florentines before the taking of Prato *Besides doing this*, continues Guicciardini, *they made a league with the King of Aragon, on reciprocal terms* (and this is the treaty reported by Fabroni) regarding a fixed number of men-at-arms for the defence of the States and stipulating that the Florentines should take into their service two hundred

[1] *Vide* my own preface to the "Dispacci di A Giustinian," and a critical essay on the "Despatches" by G. E Saltini, accompanied by new documents in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," Terza Serie, vol xxvi 1877

beni,[1] Scipione Vegio,[2] Girolamo Borgia,[3] and many others. Elsewhere we find long fragments from chronicles, long extracts from Giovio, from Pandolfo Collenuccio, from a book by Alessandro Nasi, beginning with the battle of Fornovo, and from numerous other writers; there are copies of treaties, discourses, clauses of agreements, and even several original documents. Guicciardini evidently employed several secretaries for this long and patient labour, besides working a great deal at it himself. A careful examination of these precious manuscripts is an indispensable preliminary to any decided criticism on the "Storia d'Italia." Such examination is equally required for the explanation of certain historical facts which are not yet clearly understood, inasmuch as these "Memorie" comprise extracts from many ambassadorial reports no longer in existence.

Professor Ranke justly assigns a high value to the speeches given in Guicciardini's "History"; but even in these he imagines fresh proofs of the author's lack of veracity. There is one speech made by the Gonfalonier Soderini before the Greater Council, in which he alludes to the perilous state of the Republic and the probable return of the Medici. Nerli, who heard the speech, says that Guicciardini gave an *elegant* report of it in his "History." But Professor Ranke believes that Nerli used this expression, because he could not say that it was a *faithful* report. In fact, he observes, Nerli says of the discourse that in it Soderini rendered an account of his administration, and added that the personal attacks against him were made for the purpose of changing the government, and that accordingly he would only resign by the will of the people. Nardi and others say the same. Instead, according to the version of the speech reported in the "History," Soderini gave no account of his administration, but insisted strongly on the dangers threatened by the probable return of the Medici. Professor Ranke concludes by saying, that as Guicciardini wishes to lead the way to a mention of this return, he used the Gonfalonier's speech for that purpose, and thinking less of historic truth than literary elegance and style, gave an elegant rather than a true version of the discourse. But this explanation does not hit the mark. The truth is that Soderini made two speeches on this occasion. In the first, delivered after the conspiracy of Prinzivalle della Stufa, and reported by Nardi ("Storia," vol. ii. p. 17), he gave an account of his administration. In the second, delivered later and transcribed by Guicciardini, he spoke of the threatened return of the Medici. Some chroniclers of the day give both discourses, and following their example, Capponi mentions each separately in his "Storia della Repubblica Fiorentina" (vol. ii. pp. 306 and 307); while other writers only report one of the two. Nerli records the second speech, but alludes in the same paragraph to a point given in the first. Guicciardini, being then engaged on the history of Italy and not of

[1] In the "Memorie Storiche" the name is simply indicated as follows. *Bartol.* Gherardo Bartolini Salimbeni was Guicciardini's brother-in-law, and addressed to him, in the shape of a letter, his "Cronichetta sopra le ultime azioni di Lorenzo dei Medici duca d'Urbino," afterwards published, in 1786, by Padre Ildefonso in an Appendix to vol. xxiii. of the "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani."

[2] Scipio Vegius, author of the "Ephemerides," a manuscript work in the Ambrosian Library. His name is indicated in the "Memorie Storiche" as follows: *Scipio*.

[3] This author, styled *El Borgia* in the "Memorie Storiche," must have been the Girolamo Borgia born at Sirisio, in the Basilicata, in 1475. At p. 235 and fol. of Signor Camillo Minieri Riccio's work, "Biografie degli Accademici Alfonsini, ditti poi Pontaniani" (1442–1543), published in the "Italia Reale," and afterwards in a separate edition of twenty copies, this Girolamo is stated to be a kinsman of Pope Alexander VI., and the intimate friend of Giovanni Borgia, Duke of Gandia. It is added that when the Duke was murdered, in 1497, by command of his brother Cesare, Girolamo Borgia was obliged to fly into hiding, "inasmuch as he knew all the secrets of the defunct." He was the author of many works in prose and verse, including a "Historia Aragonensium," "in twenty books, left in MS., and afterwards lost. Only the preface to bk. xix. was saved and preserved by Gio. Vincenzo Meola, as is attested in note xiii. p. 48, of the 'Letters of Onorato Fascitelli' (Naples, 1776)." We infer that this Girolamo Borgia must be the author quoted by Guicciardini, since no other of the same name is known to us, and also because all quotations and extracts from him in the "Memorie" refer mainly to events in Naples or connected with the Borgia.

enormous difficulty of establishing a logical sequence between them is not yet entirely overcome, and in the sixteenth century was necessarily insurmountable. Hence no writer could avoid more or less recurrence to the annalistic form.

Professor Ranke finally inquires how a "History" combining so many defects could achieve so great a success? Chiefly, he thinks, because of the daring fashion in which Guicciardini writes of the Popes, and his unflattering revelations of the designs and ambitions of princes. But for sincerity of speech regarding popes and potentates, many of our historians and chroniclers of the fifteenth and sixteenth century are equally deserving of praise. Sincerity was the result, less of a writer's independence of character than of the need felt by many, at that day, of examining facts, describing them as they really were, and seeking out and expounding their causes from the objective point of view And Guicciardini experienced this need to a greater extent than any other man of his time, although in accordance with weaknesses common to all mortals, personal vanity or political partisanship occasionally obscured his vision. In the main, however, it is our decided opinion that both in rendering the real truth of historical events, and in expounding their real and immediate causes, their real and immediate consequences, he ranks as the foremost historian among the many of genuine eminence produced by his age

At no other period, Professor Ranke very justly remarks, did men take so lively and general a part in public affairs, or give them so much thought, as in the Italy, and particularly in the Florence, of that day. Hence every special history was connected with events in general, and consequently acquired a general importance. This quality is most clearly present in the speeches contained in Guicciardini's "History of Italy." To arrive at a thorough comprehension of the merit of that work, it should be kept in mind that whereas other Italian histories of the period are invariably more or less provincial, this one alone is a really general history. The author has at last escaped from the narrow bounds of local ideas, and dwells more at length upon Italian than upon Florentine events He was neither exclusively municipal nor exclusively clerical, nor was he sufficiently wedded to ecclesiastical interests to forfeit his mental independence. Either attitude alone would have restricted his intellect, but being able to regard affairs from both points of view, we find him able to estimate events in the general and independent manner, that while only becoming the common attribute of historians in the eighteenth century, had been already initiated by Guicciardini two hundred years before. Accordingly, his work must always take rank as one of the grandest historical productions of which we are possessed.

These considerations, barely outlined in the first edition of Ranke's work, but somewhat more developed in the second, do full justice to Guicciardini, and define the extent and value of his powers, with a penetration and originality truly worthy of the great German critic. Nevertheless, he continues to believe that the merits to which he alludes are confined to the discourses, and absent from the narrative itself, in which, as he puts it, there is no hope of finding the objective truth of events. "Nur darf man nicht in den Buche den objectiven Thatbestand der Ereignisse in den Handen zu haben glauben" (p. 57 of second edition) We, on the contrary, have sought to prove that this truth is to be found in the narrative, and that the charges of inexactitude brought against Guicciardini are very rarely justified in full. But notwithstanding all that we have had to say, we are also bound to add that although in this early work Professor Ranke shows unjust hostility to Guicciardini, he was, nevertheless, the first to trace out the right path towards a complete critical appreciation of the "Storia d'Italia," and that the few general considerations he gives in conclusion are thoroughly admirable. Had he been able to consult the manuscripts of our great Italian historian, undoubtedly he would have pronounced a different judgment, given us a complete and definitive criticism. We can only hope that some one will undertake a new critical edition of the "History," verifying every point by reference to the manuscripts, seeking out,

men-at-arms, subjects of that king, thereby meaning, though without open mention of the fact, that the Marchese delle Palude was the captain to be engaged. ("Storia d'Italia," vol. v. bk. xi pp. 63-64.) Now if it be certain that the 140,000 ducats were paid, it is likewise certain that the adhesion of Florence to the League was an implied and necessary result of the restoration of the Medici. And if, like Guicciardini, we separate all this from the treaty afterwards concluded with the Viceroy on the 12th of September, we shall see that on this point also the "History" keeps to the truth.

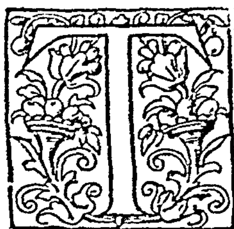
Professor Ranke brings forward further examples of what he calls Guicciardini's false accounts. The jealousies aroused between Alexander VI., Cesare and Giovanni Borgia, on account of Lucrezia, daughter of the one and sister of the others, were scarcely mentioned by any writer previous to Guicciardini; and the latter's tales were derived from the epigrams of Pontano and Sannazzaro, certain hints in the letters of Pietro Martire, and a libel reported in Burchard's "Diary." But Pietro Martire made many blunders, nor can libels and epigrams have weight as sources of history. To all this it may be replied that since the researches of Gregorovius and the numerous documents on the Borgia which have been recently published, this accusation can no longer be maintained. Guicciardini only stated what had been previously stated and believed by very many chroniclers, very many Italian ambassadors, and he continually consulted the latter's reports. Among the extracts from letters and documents comprised in the "Memorie" we find several "Ex Archivio" dated 1497, others "Ex Marcello," namely from papers in the hands of the secretary, Marcello Virgilio. Among the latter there is an entry as follows:—*June. The death of Candia accomplished by his brother's order, from envy, and on account of their sister* ("Memorie Istoriche," vol. i. The pages are not numbered regularly). We cite this instance only; but there is a considerable number of notes relating to the Borgia, which more than prove that even if any doubts still exist as to many of the deeds attributed to the Borgia, we have certainly no reason to suppose them, either that Guicciardini invented them or that they were merely derived from libels and epigrams. For instance, it is true that he erred in believing that the Pope died through taking at supper a dose of poison prepared by him for another. The "Despatches" of A. Giustinian prove this tale to be false, and that the Pope really died of Roman fever But, at the time, the story of the poison was very generally credited; Giovio asserted it to be true; even Professor Ranke accepts it in his "History of the Popes," and shows as much liking for Giovio as hostility to Guicciardini, although the latter was a far more faithful and trustworthy narrator.

In treating of the general arrangement of Guicciardini's "History," Ranke justly remarks that it is too much in the old style of the Annals. Every year the author makes a fresh start, and thus continually interrupts his narrative of all events beginning in one year, and carried on through others This is a very serious defect, seeing that Guicciardini treats of a vast chain of events which thus are frequently cut short, and then taken up again. However, as he generally relegates secondary matters to the close of each year, after previously attending to all principal events, this gives a certain orderliness to the narrative. Also, the frequent speeches introduced in it are of considerable use in explaining events, and connecting them in their due order. Besides these reasonable remarks, Ranke might also add that the division of the work into books and chapters is not made year by year and month by month; but rather arranged according to the nature of the events described, thus greatly conducing to order and clearness. At any rate, it is necessary to remember that, Machiavelli alone excepted, no writer had then entirely discarded the annalistic form, although all were endeavouring to shake it off. In the "Florentine History," treating of a smaller number of facts, Guicciardini achieved a far better arrangement; but his "History of Italy" dealt with a much wider and more complicated series of events. Even at this day the



CHAPTER XVI.

The advance of the Imperial army into Lombardy—Guicciardini as President of Romagna, and as Lieutenant at the camp—Machiavelli's return to public life—His journey to Rome—His mission to Guicciardini at Faenza—His journey to Venice—His correspondence with Guicciardini—His nomination as chancellor of the *Procuratori delle Mura*—His superintendence of the works for the fortification of the city.



HE imperial army now in possession of the Duchy of Milan, and commanded by Constable de Bourbon, was confidently preparing for its onward march, and fresh events still more fatal to Italy had become inevitable. Upon these events the attention of Italian politicians was now fixed, for all were in one way or another concerned in them. Even Machiavelli was again drawn into the vortex of public business, and frequently despatched to the camp of the allies, where he found Guicciardini established as the Pope's lieutenant. These two Florentines exerted all their energy, all their skill, and fruitlessly displayed the best points of their respective characters. But Machiavelli being already advanced in years and near to his death, still in a subordinate position, and in the service of a State that was itself dependent on the caprice of a Pope, could do little more than manifest the excellence of his intentions, his ardent patriotism and his grief for the unhappy fate of his country. Guicciardini, on the other hand, was in his prime and invested with very high authority; so for him this proved the most splendid phase of his political career. He had a representative in Rome in the person of Messer Cesare Colombo, to whom he constantly sent despatches, of which the contents were to be communicated to the Pope and the Sacred

with their aid, the original sources of the work, and judging it, if without the undue harshness of the illustrious Ranke, yet always in accordance with the method *traced out by him.*[1]

[1] We must here express our thanks to Count Francesco Guicciardini for his kindness in allowing us to examine the manuscripts of his renowned ancestor. Our friends, Professor C Paoli and A Gherardi, of the Florentine Archives, have always been generous with their help, and it is therefore a pleasure to take this opportunity of expressing our gratitude. We also beg to thank the Superintendents of the Tuscan and Venetian Archives for the great courtesy and attention invariably received from them.



resistance, and capitulation will bring about our enslavement.[1] This would be the moment for daring designs, and I should applaud him who would adopt a course having prospects equal to its perils.[2] It is vain to hope for aught from the French, who take no thought for the morrow and will be ready to consent to everything for the sake of releasing their king. I well understand that just now every good brain is puzzled; but he who sees that by standing still he will be overwhelmed by destruction, ought to prefer the worst dangers to certain death."[3] And upon hearing of the capture of Morone, whom he had never trusted, he wrote: "Now the Imperialists will delay no longer. They will perhaps decide on taking instant possession of the Milanese duchy, and probably succeed in doing so through the weakness of the duke, or by some fresh twist on the part of Morone. And we have nothing to hope for, because they will push still farther on to occupy the States of the Church, or to overthrow the Florentine State, or to do even worse should opportunity occur The Emperor wishes to be master of Italy, and can never be the friend of any one likely to prove an obstacle to that purpose. It is vain to hope for aught from a treaty with France, who is now prostrate, for it would always be to our hurt. No treaty could be durable without the release of the king, who would observe no conditions which might prove to his disadvantage. The truth is that Cæsar will accomplish his purpose while the others are slumbering; and thus will prevail over all, not by superior strength, but by the *fatali omnium ignavia*.[4] These words seem to clearly foretell the progress of the Imperialists towards the sack of Rome and the siege of Florence. Nor did Guicciardini alter his opinion on learning that an imperial envoy was proposing terms, and that the Pope was in treaty with him. "The Emperor," he wrote, "seeks to crush France and the Venetians, and must first therefore assure himself of the Pope, and this he will do as soon as he has completed the Milanese business. In any case he will become the arbiter of Italy. The Pope will be a sovereign in name only, and will for the present be mocked with plans which will end in smoke.[5] But I have the greatest fear that he will adopt the most unworthy course. Those dreading war should be shown the perils of peace. Over-prudence is now imprudence, and it is no longer possible to undertake measured enterprises. It is indispensable to

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p. 201, letter from Forli, of 25th of March, 1525.
[2] Ibid., vol. viii. p. 246, letter from Ravenna, of 28th of May, 1525.
[3] Ibid., vol. viii p. 257, letter from Faenza, 15th of June, 1525
[4] Ibid., vol viii p. 321, letter of 23rd of October, 1525.
[5] Ibid., vol. viii. p. 360, letter of 11th of December, 1525.

College. These despatches give us a faithful portraiture of the events of the time, and bear emphatic testimony to the breadth of Guicciardini's political sagacity and excellence as a statesman.

While holding the post of governor in Emilia, he had won much applause by his great energy and promptitude during the war in that part of Italy. Accordingly, in 1524, he was nominated President of Romagna, with the mission of pacifying a province long torn by party strife, and stained by continual crimes. His intention was to first terrify the guilty by rigorous measures, and then rule with clemency. But after insisting on the infliction of capital punishment in the case of a criminal, "plunged up to his eyes in guilt," he discovered that he had to face far greater difficulties than he had expected.[1] The malefactors appealed to the Pope for protection, had themselves recommended to mercy and obtained safe-conducts. This quickly caused an increase of crime, and weakened the authority of the President, who became irritated and alarmed.[2] A certain Bastiano Orsello, who had killed his grandfather, and was accused of having committed sixteen or eighteen murders during a riot, as well as innumerable acts of rapine, obtained the protection both of Giovanni dei Medici and the Pope.[3] And while Guicciardini complained of one criminal, another was pardoned, so that he was driven to exclaim in disgust: "It were better to acquit all the assassins and beg them to commit worse crimes! By heaven, this has been a fine caprice! Murderers have been seen at large, who had played at ball with their victims' heads in the public squares of Forlì."[4] Yet he was able to profit by the graver anxieties assailing the Pope, and carry out his own measures in such fashion that by the close of the year he could boast of having established order in Romagna.[5]

He then turned his attention to the events taking place outside Romagna, giving decisions and counsels of so much justice and truth that they may sometimes be regarded in the light of prophecies. Shortly before the battle of Pavia, he declared it his opinion that the Imperialists would prevail.[6] And when his words were verified, he added: "Henceforth everything will turn to our disadvantage. The Italians are not strong enough for

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p 28, letter of 1st of June, 1524.

[2] Ibid, vol. viii p. 66 and fol., letter of 12th of July.

[3] Ibid, vol. viii. pp. 66 and 100, letters of the 12th of July and 7th of September.

[4] Ibid., vol. viii. pp. 121 and 123, letter from Forli of 7th and 8th of September.

[5] Ibid., vol. viii. pp. 126 and 153, letters of the 12th of October and 28th of November.

[6] Ibid., vol. viii. p 171, letter of the 19th of January, 1525.

inflated and incorrect style, and his confused erudition, would not have sufficed to hand his name down to posterity, had not his moral qualities given even to his literary work an original stamp. Of exemplary character, and a lover of liberty, he was elected secretary of the Republic in 1375, and served it with the utmost zeal and ardour to the time of his death. Animated by patriotism and the love of letters, he freed the Florentine official style of writing from all scholastic forms, trying instead to render it classical and Ciceronian, and thus he was the first to write diplomatic and business documents like works of art, and he wrote them with singular success. Galeazzo Maria Visconti is said to have declared himself more afraid of one of Salutati's letters than of a thousand Florentine knights; and it is an undoubted fact that when the Republic was at war with the Pope, the letters written by Salutati, who, in a magniloquent style evoked the ancient memories of Rome, had the effect of stirring to revolt, in the name of liberty, many territories belonging to the Church. Classic names, reminiscences and forms, had the power of arousing a truly wonderful enthusiasm in the Italian mind.

And Salutati's work had very noteworthy consequences even in the future. The enlistment of literature in the service of politics, increasingly bound up the former with the public life of the Florentines, and prepared the way for a radical transformation in the latter. The old forms and conventionalities were gradually replaced by true and precise formulas, which, just as they had forced literary men to turn their eyes from heaven to earth, and from mysticism to reality, also induced statesmen to treat affairs from a natural point of view, and to rule men by studying their passions, without allowing themselves to be shackled by prejudice and traditional usage. This way led by gradual steps to the political science of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, that owes to learning not a few of its merits and defects. From this moment dates the introduction of that use and abuse of eloquence, logic, and subtlety, to forward certain political ends, which later became cunning and deceit. Salutati, however, never ceased to preserve his sincerity and open habit of mind.[1]

Up to the last day of his life he continued to study and to encourage youth in his own love for the classics.[2] He was sixty-

[1] Voigt has been the first to notice this point respecting Salutati.

[2] Leonardo Aretino has recorded that he owed to Salutati his knowledge of Greek and thorough study of Latin. "Nemo unquam parens in unico diligendo filio tam sedulus fuit quam ille in me." And Coluccio mentions this friendship with great delicacy and much nobility of language. "Continua et studiosa nobis

resort to arms to avoid a peace that makes us slaves."[1] And this even was verified. War became inevitable, and Guicciardini was called to Rome, to be first asked for his advice and then despatched to the camp as Lieutenant-General. He then entrusted the government of Romagna to his brother Jacopo, leaving him long and minute written instructions affording additional proofs of his aptitude as a ruler.[2]

Now at last the moment had come for Machiavelli's reappearance upon the political stage. We find him still of the same temper; still buffeted by fortune; occupying very modest posts, exalted by vivid enthusiasm for his Italian motherland, and striving vainly to save it; ever dominated and transported by his constant ideals. These ideals of his so often causing his contemporaries to regard him as a fantastic visionary, seem to us almost sublime and prophetic, exactly because they are more in sympathy with our time than with his own, and show a penetrative intuition of the future, rather than a practical knowledge of the present. Guicciardini, on the other hand, whose main gift lay in practical knowledge of actualities, had better fortune and greater power. Colder than Machiavelli, impassible and calculating, he might well have addressed his great contemporary in the words applied by Dante to Farinata degli Uberti:—

> "E' par che voi veggiate, se ben odo,
> Dinanzi quel che il tempo seco adduce,
> E nel presente tenete altro modo."[3]

Even Machiavelli seems to have been often aware of the contradictory conditions by which he was surrounded, although forcing himself to believe his contemporaries and his country, whose defects he so clearly recognized, far better than they were and capable of heroic resolves. Then, deeply discouraged, he would suddenly give vent to his satiric, biting, cynical spirit, and indulge in unexpected and irresistible outbursts. But before long he again reverted to his ideal theories, clinging to them with unshaken faith down to the last hour of his life.

In the early part of 1525, before the tide of fresh calamity had risen to its height, he was gloomily meditating on the news of the day, and finishing the eighth book of his "Histories," which comes down to the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent. He was anxious to present it in person to the Pope, to whom it was dedicated, in the hope of thus obtaining some pecuniary aid towards

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p. 366, letter of 24th of December.
[2] Ibid, vol. viii. p. 393 and fol.
[3] "Inferno," Canto x, lines 97-99

its continuation. He mentioned the matter in a letter to Vettori, who, however, gave him very little encouragement. Nevertheless, on the 8th of March, Vettori wrote from Rome to say that the Pope had questioned him concerning the "Storie," and he had replied that he had read part of the work and thought it would give satisfaction. He had also said that he had discouraged Machiavelli from coming to offer it in person, because this did not seem to be a fitting moment. The Pope's answer, however, was: he ought to come, for I am sure that his books will please and be eagerly read. Nevertheless, Vettori, with his usual frigidity, ended his letter by saying: "Yet you must not deceive yourself, for even if you came, you might be left empty-handed in times such as these."[1]

After much hesitation, Machiavelli at last determined to visit Rome, and not only found the Pope well disposed towards him, but that even Filippo Strozzi and Jacopo Salviati were readier to give him practical help than Vettori, who was only lavish of words. Salviati in fact had already endeavoured to find some post for him; but without success, as the Pope had not smiled on the proposal.[2] Filippo Strozzi was more fortunate. By means of Francesco del Nero, he was able to inform Machiavelli, who had already left Rome, that his Holiness was willing to give him a fresh subsidy, in order that he might go on with his "Histories."[3] In fact, the subsidy was afterwards granted him, and consisted of another hundred ducats.[4]

The real reason why, notwithstanding the Pope's affability, Machiavelli left Rome without concluding anything to his own

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No 34, letter of the 8th of March, 1524-25, Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition, document xiii.

[2] Letters of the 3rd and 17th of May, 1525, written by Salviati to his son the Cardinal. The first tells him of the proposal to send Machiavelli with him to Spain; the second says: "We must not count upon having Niccolò Machiavelli, for I see that the Pope takes but slowly to that idea." Desjardins, "Négociations Diplomatiques," vol. ii. pp 840, 841.

[3] Letter of Francesco del Nero, dated 27th of July, 1525. It is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 45 *Vide* Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition, document xiv. It begins thus "Io ebbi una vostra da Roma, ad laquale feci risposta." This proves the fact of Machiavelli's visit to Rome at this period, seldom noted by other writers. Further proofs are also to be found in the letters that we have already quoted.

The undated letter mentioned at p. 281 of this volume might be supposed to have been written by Marietta on this occasion, but from the fact of her mentioning a new born boy and a little girl still in her babyhood. Besides, Marietta seemed to allude to a long absence on the part of her husband, and on this occasion he made a very short stay in Rome.

[4] "Opere," vol. viii. pp. 177-181, Machiavelli's letter to Guicciardini, without date.

advantage, and even before being assured of the promised sum for the "Histories," is one that reflects much honour upon his character. Arriving in Rome after the battle of Pavia, when the minds of all Italians were held in suspense by the imminent danger of the imperial army taking the offensive *at any moment*, he almost immediately renounced all thought of personal interests, and left his friends to attend to them. He spoke to the Pope only of the best measures to be adopted in the present state of affairs, and of how to fortify Florence against any sudden attack To Pontiff, cardinals, and all whom he met at Court, he earnestly expounded his old idea of a national militia, trying to convince every one that the only efficacious remedy would now be to arm the people, and summon them to the defence of their country against the threatening foreign host. And he spoke with so much heat and eloquence, as to at last succeed in convincing the Pope and a few of those about him. In fact, in the June of the same year, he was sent with a Brief to Guicciardini in Romagna, to explain his design, and try to carry it into effect there, among a population well trained to arms. Jacopo Salviati and Schonberg spoke of the plan to Colombo, begging him also to address Guicciardini on the matter. The latter, being perhaps the coolest and most practical head in Italy at that moment, wrote the following reply from Faenza on the 15th of June, 1525: "I have noted what is said about the coming of Machiavelli. I shall await his arrival, in order to comprehend his design, before giving my opinion; for it is a matter requiring much consideration, and so you must tell the others also. Meanwhile, inquire into the Pope's object in making this proposal, for if he intends it as a remedy for present dangers, it is a measure that cannot be executed in time."[1]

On the 19th he wrote that Machiavelli had arrived and explained the scheme of the Ordinance. "Certainly, if this thing could be carried to the desired end, it would be one of the most useful and praiseworthy works that his Holiness could undertake. And I should not be afraid of giving arms to the people, for with a few good regulations and severe discipline everything could be managed; but I would not arm a population such as this one. For Romagna, being lacerated by cruel enmities, is split into two great factions, still known by the denominations of Guelphs and Ghibellines, the former relying on France, the latter on the Empire. The Church has no true friends in either party, and therefore, if at war with the Emperor, would be in great danger from having armed his friends, in the hope of employing them to

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii p 263.

her own advantage. This enterprise would need to be founded on the love of the people, and the people of Romagna have not the slightest love for the Church. There is no security here either for life or property, and therefore men look to foreign princes, upon whom all depend in this province. And to hope to compose the Militia Ordinance, according to Machiavelli's desire, of men independent of either faction, would be equal to composing it of none. Nevertheless, if the thing is to be attempted at all risks, I will throw myself into it heart and soul, and so, too, should his Holiness, for once started it would have to be made of more importance than anything else." He then went on to say that the Pope's idea of burdening the already exhausted Communes with the expense of the project was most dangerous, and would only, from the outset, irritate them against an institution for which their sympathy was indispensable [1]

On the 23rd of June he again wrote to express his doubts, invited Colombo to first communicate his letter to Schonberg and Salviati, taking note of their advice and opinions, and then show it to the Pope, remembering to most carefully observe "his words and gestures." [2] However, while he was so full of anxiety, seeing the Pope about to plunge without reflection or energy into so uncertain a scheme, Clement's enthusiasm had already burnt out as quickly as a blaze of straw, and all the more quickly on finding that it would involve expenditure of his own funds. He did not even take the trouble to send a reply. Accordingly, Machiavelli, after vainly waiting for letters until the 26th of July, became persuaded that neither Guicciardini nor the Pope had the courage to arm the people, and unwilling to waste any more time, went back to Florence stating that he should there await their commands.[3]

He sent Guicciardini several letters from Florence, but nothing more was said respecting the Ordinance. The correspondence was devoted to private affairs and to the jests by which both sought to distract their minds from the present miseries of their country and the greater ills by which it was threatened. But it was impossible to avoid all mention of these dangers, and they alluded to them with bitter pain. On the 17th of August Machiavelli said a word in reference to the proposed marriage of one of Guicciardini's daughters to a wealthy Florentine, expressed his satisfaction that his "Mandragola" should have given his friend so much pleasure as to make him wish to have it acted at

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p. 266, letter cxxx. of the "Presidenza della Romagna," the second dated 19th of June, 1525, from Faenza.

[2] Ibid, vol. viii. p. 270, letter cxxxi. of 23rd of June

[3] Ibid., vol. viii p. 287, letter cxxxix. of 26th of July.

Faenza during the following carnival, and promised to attend the performance. He sent him a medicine, from which he said that he had often derived great benefit, especially when suffering from overwork. He added that he might soon have to go to Venice, in which case he should certainly halt at Faenza on his way back, in order to visit his friends [1]

In fact, on the 19th of August, Machiavelli was sent to Venice on business of slight importance, at the instance of the consuls of the Woollen Guild, and of the Florentine consuls in Roumania, also known as the Provveditori of the Levant. Certain Florentine merchants returning with much money from the East, on board a Venetian brigantine, found on arriving in one of the ports of the Republic that the vessel was in the power of one G B. Donati, who accompanied the Turkish Orator. This Donati called the merchants together, and after behaving to them in a manner "too insulting for description, forced them to pay a ransom of 1,500 gold ducats" [2] Accordingly, the consuls of the Guild now demanded compensation from the Serene Republic, on the ground that Donati was a Venetian subject. This mission was speedily executed, and the only documents that we have relating to it consist of Machiavelli's credentials, his letters of instruction, and the papers containing the statement of the case [3] But we learn that a rumour was afloat in Florence at that time to the effect that Machiavelli had tempted fortune in Venice, and "won a prize of two or three thousand ducats in the lottery." Filippo dei Nerli wrote to him on the subject, also adding that Machiavelli's name had been put on the list of citizens eligible for political employment, for as he had been recommended by some ladies having a kindness for him, the Accoppiatori had shut an eye.[4] And he proceeded to cut jokes upon this topic, in a tone that is not very easy to understand at the present day. But we perceive that some favour had been shown to Machiavelli, inasmuch as he had never fulfilled all the conditions of eligibility rigorously demanded by the law concerning offices of the State.[5] As regards his winnings

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p. 167, letter lvii. As some writers have thought that Machiavelli's death was caused by abuse of this medicine, it is as well to say it was a mild purgative, and that aloes—the only potent drug in it—was used in too small a proportion to do any injury. Mons. Artaud, author of "Machiavel, son genie et ses erreurs," took the trouble to have the original prescription made up. and found the pills to be very mild aids to digestion.

[2] "Opere," vol. vii. p. 454

[3] Ibid., vol. vii. pp. 450–455; "Opere" (P. M.), vol. vi. pp 220–224.

[4] Ibid, vol. viii. p. 171, letter lviii. from Florence, 6th of September, 1525.

[5] This may possibly be the reason of Ranke's belief that Machiavelli had not the rights of a citizen. He had not the so-called *honours*, the privilege of many, but not of all citizens.

in the lottery, they were either very insignificant or purely fictitious, for we find no allusion to them elsewhere, and two or three thousand ducats would have entirely changed Machiavelli's position, since he had never possessed so large a sum And although Canossa, the Ambassador to Venice, saw him twice during his short stay, and gave news of him to Vettori, he made no allusion to the rumoured prize. He only wrote that Machiavelli and he had spoken on public matters, regarding which there was nought to say, "save that we are falling into slavery, or rather buying it. All are aware of this and no one tries to prevent it." [1]

On returning to Florence, apparently without having se Guicciardini, who was then at Imola, Machiavelli found his s Bernardo ill, and a letter [2] awaiting him from his other s Lodovico, a very impetuous youth, who was always in hot wat at Adrianople, where he was engaged in business He now wro thence to complain of a certain priest who would not resign church appertaining to the Machiavelli family near St. Andr in Percussina. He threatened to come over and obtain justice f himself, unless his father could set things straight without dela "I cannot see," he said in conclusion,[3] "why we should wait long. It seems to be like putting out two of our own eyes in ord to put out one of that fellow's."

To these petty worries was added the gravest anxiety abo public affairs. Morone was in prison, Pescara advancing Milan, the Pope uncertain and irresolute as ever. The letters Guicciardini and Machiavelli fluctuated between hopelessness a an apparently cynical mirth, that was often the laughter of despa In a letter without date, Machiavelli sent his friend explanatio of the meaning of certain Florentine phrases contained in t "Mandragola" He promised to compose some new canzonets be sung between the acts, and to send to Faenza the celebrat Barbera and her troop of singers.[4] In another letter, also undate and signed: *Niccolò Machiavelli, historic, comic,* and *trag* author, he began by speaking at length of the marriage th Guicciardini had so much at heart; and then, with a sudd change of subject, went on to say: "Morone has been seized, a the duchy of Milan is done for; and just as that man waited

[1] Letter of the 15th of September, 1525, "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. N 12, Appendix (III) of the Italian edition, document xv.

[2] "Opere," vol. viii. p. 174, letter lix., without date

[3] This is the letter already quoted elsewhere, of 14th of August, 1525 V Appendix of the Italian edition, document i.

[4] "Opere," vol. viii p 174. The canzonets to which he refers are not, in fa included in the early editions of the play, but were only published at a much la date.

be snuffed out, so will all the other princes wait for it,[1] nor is there any hope of mending matters: *Sic datum desuper.* Veggo d'Alagna tornar lo fiordaliso. E nel Vicario suo, &c. *Nosti versus coetera per te ipsum lege.*"[2] And then, with another sudden change: "Let us have a merry Carnival, and engage a lodging for the Barbera among those friars, and if they do not lose their heads I won't take any payment, and recommend me to the Maliscotta, and let me know how the arrangements for the comedy are going on, and when you intend to have it played. I have had that increase of a hundred ducats for my 'History.' Now I am beginning to write again, and vent my rage by accusing the princes who have done everything to bring us to this pass."[3]

And the correspondence continued in this strain. Writing on the 19th of December, Machiavelli recurred to the affair of the marriage, and, to find a way of bringing it about, suggested that a sum of money should be obtained from the Pope to swell the maiden's dower. Guicciardini, being a prouder and more practical man, hesitated about addressing Clement VII. on matters of that kind, when the States of the Church and all Italy were in so precarious a condition. Pescara was now dead, and the Italian potentates seemed disposed to slumber, no little to the increase of the general danger. Even Machiavelli concluded his letter by saying: Every one now feels reassured, "and believing that there is plenty of time, gives time to the enemy. And I end by thinking that from this quarter there will never proceed any noble or daring deed enabling us either to live or die with honour, so great is the fear I discern in these citizens, and so great their vileness, with regard to those who would devour us."[4]

Guicciardini replied on the 26th, and began his letter by fresh reference to the comedy, "for it seems to me by no means the least important of the matters in hand, and at any rate a practicable thing, being one in our own power, so that it is no waste of

[1] That is, all our other princes, by passively waiting, will come to the same end.

[2] "Veggio in Alagna entrar lo fiordaliso
E nel vicario suo Cristo esser catto"
(Dante, "Purgatorio," xx. 86, 87.)

As all know, these verses allude to the imprisonment of Boniface VIII. The treatment of this Pope at the hands of the Colonna in Anagni (Alagna) really resembles, as we shall presently see, the behaviour of the same family to Clement VII. in Rome.

[3] "Opere," vol viii p. 177, letter lx., undated, but written at the end of November or beginning of December, 1525.

[4] Ibid., vol. viii. p. 181, letter lxi

time to think of it, and recreation is more necessary than ever amid so much turmoil."

He did not know what to say on public affairs, seeing that every one disapproved of the only opinion that he held to be worth anything. "The evils of peace will be recognized when the opportunity for war is past. We alone persist in awaiting the coming storm in the open road, and we shall not be able to say that our power was torn from us, but that *turpiter elapsa sit de manibus*."[1]

It appears that Guicciardini and Machiavelli were not alone in trying to distract their thoughts by amusing themselves with comedies, for all Italians, during these terrible years, sought diversion in carnival festivities. The Cazzuola company in Florence, which had shortly before given capital representations of the "Mandragola," was now, in the carnival of 1525, performing the "Clizia" in the garden expressly laid out for that purpose by Jacopo Fornaciaio, near the S. Frediano gate. The scenery was painted by Bastiano da San Gallo, who, in consequence of his skill in work of this kind, was nicknamed Aristotle.[2] On this occasion so many grand festivities and banquets were offered to the nobles, burghers, and working classes, that they were a subject of talk all over Italy. It seems that Machiavelli threw himself into these diversions with no less zest than the others;[3] and that Filippo dei Nerli, who had little affection for him, while ostensibly his friend, congratulated him upon his good spirits, although professing to others to be highly scandalized by Niccolò's conduct. Two private companies in Venice were at the same time giving performances respectively of the "Mandragola" and of the "Menæchmi" of Plautus. The latter work was so coldly received in comparison,

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. p 183, letter lxii

[2] Vasari, "Vita dei Pittori," the Le Monnier edition, vol. xi. p. 204, in the "Vita di Aristotele da San Gallo," and vol. xii. p. 16, in the "Vita di Giovan Francesco Rustici"

[3] In one of his letters to Machiavelli, dated from Modena, 22nd of February 1525, and published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. 91, he congratulated him with a great show of affection, and styled him *Carissimo et come fratello honorando*. In another written to Francesco del Nero on the 1st of March of the same year, he, on the contrary, professed to be vastly scandalized by the amusements in which Machiavelli had indulged, and blamed him for so doing. *Vide* Appendix III of the Italian edition, document xvi. The date being the 1st of March, there may be some doubt as to the year; but from other letters written at that time by Nerli from Modena, it is plain that he did not date by the Florentine, but by the usual style Therefore Passerini was mistaken in declaring that the letter in question was of the year 1526; it is of 1525. How could Machiavelli in the January of 1526 promise Guicciardini that he would go to Faenza to witness the performance of the "Mandragola"? He must at least have referred to the fact of his bieng obliged almost at the same moment to attend the representation of the "Clizia" in Florence.

that its actors invited the other company to their house to repeat the modern play.[1] And Machiavelli was pressed by the Florentine merchants in Venice to send them another work from his pen to be brought out the following May. The performance organized in Romagna by Guicciardini for the Carnival of 1526,[2] seems never to have taken place, in consequence of the President being obliged to make a hasty journey to Rome. The news of the treaty arranged between France and Spain for the release of the king, although upon what conditions was not as yet precisely known, kept men's minds in greater suspense than before, and it was necessary to be prepared for emergencies.

The letters of the two friends now began to dwell upon this news with greater persistence. Guicciardini, as we have seen, had long held the opinion that the Emperor would release the king, but that in no case would the latter remain faithful to the agreed terms. Machiavelli, on the contrary, clung to the erroneous belief that the king would not be liberated, but would in any case remain true to his word. And even after the news of the treaty was generally known, he found it difficult to change his mistaken views. He wrote to Filippo Strozzi on the subject, and also on the 15th of March to Guicciardini, saying that his head was confused by this treaty, and repeating that either the king would not be released, or would observe the conditions demanded of him. "It is true that in this way he would cause the ruin of Italy, and might even be exposed to the loss of his kingdom;" but having, as you say, a French brain, this dread would not affect him as it might another. And whether he be released or not, there will be war in Italy all the same. For us, two ways only are open: either to throw ourselves on the mercy of the victor and furnish him

[1] See the letter of Giovanni Mannelli to Machiavelli, dated Venice, 28th of February, 1525, in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. 90. In this instance, also, Passerini believes the year to be indicated according to the Florentine style; but the matter is doubtful at the least. It is certain that when away from their own State the Florentines sometimes computed the years in their own style, and at others according to that of the place of their abode.

[2] It is clear from Machiavelli's letters that he had absolutely promised to go, but after all did not go. On the 3rd of January, 1525–6, he wrote: "I will come at any rate, nor shall anything but illness, from which may God preserve me, keep me away; and I will come after the end of this month, at any time you may appoint." He added that the Barbera was detained by certain lovers, but that nevertheless he hoped to be able to send her. "Opere," vol. viii. p. 185, letter lxiii. This letter is followed by that of the 15th of March, from which we learn that "The Barbera is now there; if you can be of any service to her, I recommend her to your good offices, for she gives me far more anxiety than the Emperor." Guicciardini was in Rome at that moment, as we learn from his "Opere Inedite." The Barbera had probably gone there for other performances and in search of adventures.

with money, or to fly to arms. The former course is not satisfactory, for the enemy would first take our money and then our life; accordingly there is nothing left for us but to fight. At this point Machiavelli indulges in another of the daring ideas which were so essential his own.

"I shall now say something that you will think madness; I shall suggest a design that you will consider either foolhardy or ridiculous; nevertheless, these times demand audacious, unusual, and strange resolves And every one who knows how to reason of this world is aware that the people is changeable and foolish; nevertheless, taking it for what it is, it may often be said to do that which it should. There were rumours in Florence a few days ago that Signor Giovanni dei Medici was collecting a company of adventurers to make war wherever it best suited him. This news set me thinking that the people was teaching us that which ought to be done. I hold it to be the general belief, that there is no leader in Italy whom soldiers would more willingly follow, nor of whom the Spaniards could have greater fear and respect. Likewise every one holds Signor Giovanni to be daring, impetuous, full of grand ideas, and disposed to adopt great decisions. It might therefore be possible, by secretly gaining him recruits, and the greatest possible number of horses and foot soldiers, to enable him to raise an army." "This might speedily disturb the Spaniards' brains and force them to change the plans by which they hope to be able to destroy Tuscany and the Church without encountering any obstacles. It might even change the mind of the king, for it would show him that he had to deal with living men. And mark this, that if the king be not stirred by living things and by force, he will observe the treaty and leave you to your fate, for you have too often been against him, or remained passive spectators, for him not to fear that the same might occur this time likewise." [1]

Filippo Strozzi showed the Pope the letter he had received from Machiavelli, and also spoke to him of the proposal contained in that addressed to Guicciardini. But these ideas were too daring, too patriotic to win acceptance from Clement VII., who was bewildered by the mere mention of them. He replied that the king would soon be released, and faithfully observe the terms prescribed, so that Italy would be left at the Emperor's mercy. He refused to entertain the proposal of arming Giovanni dei Medici, on the ground that this would be equivalent to openly declaring war against the Emperor. In fact, Giovanni dei Medici could not raise an army without money, and were that furnished by the Pope, the latter would at once become the virtual head of

[1] "Opere," vol. viii p. 188 and fol., letter lxiv., of 15th of March, 1525-6.

five years old when a rumour that Emmanuel Crisolora, of Constantinople, was about to come to Florence to teach Greek, intoxicated him with joy, and seemed to give him back his youth. In 1406 he died at the age of seventy-six, and was buried in the Cathedral with much solemnity, after his deeds had been celebrated in a Latin oration, and his corpse crowned with the poet's laurel. From that time the Republic always chose celebrated men of letters for her secretaries. The long series beginning with Salutati, comprised Marcello Virgilio, Machiavelli, and Giannotti,[1] and all the Italian Courts followed the example of Florence.

Niccolò Niccoli was a celebrated man in his day, although no author, and only an intelligent collector of manuscripts, which he often copied and corrected with his own pen. Yet, for the sake of classical studies, he put himself to infinite trouble and expense, and made many sacrifices. His researches after ancient manu-

consuetudo fuit, et cum de cunctis quæ componerem judex esset, et ego suarum rerum versa vice, nos mutuo, sicut ferrum ferro acuitur, exacueramus; nec facile dixerim ex hoc dulce et honesto contubernio, uter nostrum plus profecerit. Uterque tamen eruditior evasit, fateri oporteat mutuo nos fuisse vicissim discipulus et magister." These two fragments of letters are given in Moreni's preface, p. xi, of the "Invectiva Lini Coluccii Salutati in Antonium Luscum Vicentinum," Florence, 1826. Loschi, or Lusco, as P. Bracciolini calls him, was learned in Latin and civil law, was chancellor to Gio Galeazzo, then Secretary at Rome from the times of Gregory XII. to those of Nicholas V. Having spoken ill of Florence, Coluccio retorted with his "Invectiva," an example of the exaggeration and inflation sometimes reached by the learned style of writing. "Quænam urbs, non in Italia solum, sed in universo terrarum orbe est moenibus tutior, superbior palatiis, templis ornatior, formosiora edificiis; quæ porticu clarior, platea speciosior, viarum amplitudine laetior: quæ populo maior, civibus gloriosior, inexhaustior divitiis, cultior agris; quæ situ gratior, salubrior coelo, mundior caeno; quæ puteis crebior, aquis suavior?" &c., &c. And he goes on in this style for many pages (see p. 125 and fol.). According to P. Bracciolini (see note to p. xxvii of the preface to the "Invectiva"), Salutati had a collection of 800 codices, a very extraordinary number in those days. And this is how Leonardo Aretino speaks of the liberality with which Salutati gave copies of these to all his friends, after again repeating his praises of the disposition of his friend and master: "Ut omittam quod pater communis erat omnium, et amator bonorum . . . omnes in quibus conspiciebat lumen ingenii, non solum verbis incendebat ad virtutem, verum multo magis cum copiis, tum libris suis juvabat, quos ille pleno copia cornu non magis usui suo quam ceterorum esse volebat." (See p. xxvii of the above-quoted preface.) Afterwards Salutati's library was dispersed, being sold by his sons (Ibid., pp. xxvii–viii) Shepherd, in his "Vita di Poggio Bracciolini," gives various notices of Salutati, a few of his letters, and a catalogue of his works See the edition of Salutati's "Epistolæ," prepared by Mehus, which is not, however, very correct. Many of Salutati's writings still remain unedited in the public libraries of Florence.

[1] After Coluccio Salutati, the following were successively among the secretaries of the Republic: Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Poggio Bracciolini, Benedetto Accolti, Cristoforo Landino, Bartolommeo Scala, Marcello Virgilio Adriani, who was first secretary while Machiavelli was second, Donato Giannotti, and not a few others.

the enterprise.[1] Thus, in the same way that nothing had come of the Ordinance, nothing came of the ex-Secretary's new plan.

Accordingly Machiavelli now devoted himself to studying the means of fortifying the walls of Florence, a subject upon which he had held a long conversation in Rome with the Pope, who recommended him to construct works of sufficient strength to encourage the people to believe that they might withstand any attack. But he urged the construction of an entirely new circle of walls on the San Miniato side, and this was an impossibility on account of the hill of that name. In order to include it within the new walls, too wide and consequently too indefensible a circuit would be required. If, on the other hand, the existing circuit were to be narrowed, a whole quarter of the city would be left outside the defences. It would entail severe loss to demolish this quarter; yet if left standing it would be instantly seized and fortified by the enemy.[2] Machiavelli, therefore, after carefully inspecting the walls in the company of Pietro Navarro, drew up a detailed and accurate report, pointing out what works were required, insisting still more urgently than before on the expediency of only fortifying the existing walls by means of additional towers, fortalices, ditches and other defences.[3] On the 17th of May he wrote to Guicciardini, who was still in Rome, saying that his head was "so full of bastions" that he could think of nothing else. He told him how a law had been passed in Florence for the formation of a new board of magistrates to superintend the fortifications; and that if matters went on in the way expected, he, Machiavelli, would be the new chancellor. He begged that the Pope might be pressed to begin furnishing the money needed for the commencement of the works. Then, after alluding to the intelligence received from France touching the dangers to which the Pope had been exposed, and to the last news from Lombardy of the disorders in the imperial army, he concluded by remarking that all these things clearly showed "how easy it were to rid Italy of those wretches. For Heaven's sake, do not let this opportunity slip. Remember that bad counsellors and worse ministers had, virtually, imprisoned not the king but the Pope, and that he is only just released. And now the Emperor, on finding the king

[1] "Opere," vol. viii p 193, letter lxv., of Filippo Strozzi, from Rome, the last day of March, 1526.

[2] Ibid., vol. viii p. 199, letter lxvii, to Francesco Guicciardini, and dated Florence, 4th of April, 1526.

[3] Ibid., vol. iv. pp. 459–468 This report is highly praised by Major Jahns, in the essay on Machiavelli, to which we have so frequently referred.



CHAPTER XVII.

Attack upon Rome by the Colonna—Truce between the Pope and Emperor—Guicciardini and Machiavelli at the camp—Cremona surrenders to the League—Guicciardini receives orders to withdraw the army across the Pò—The imperial forces advance on Bologna—Unsuccessful attempt to conclude an agreement between the Pope and the Emperor—Machiavelli returns to Florence—Rioting in Florence—The sack of Rome—Expulsion of the Medici, and re-establishment of the Florentine Republic.

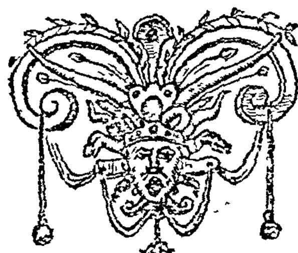


HE Emperor had now only to push forward his army in order to become absolute master of Italy. But he was totally penniless, and the country, although weak and divided, was entirely hostile to him. Francis I. was once more at liberty, and having decided not to observe the conditions imposed upon him, was making ready for war. For all these reasons it was of the highest importance to Charles V. to obtain the neutrality, if not the friendship, of the Pope. Cardinal Colonna, a better soldier than prelate, and the bitter enemy of Clement VII., had offered to seize his person; and the Emperor had sent Don Ugo di Moncada to Rome, commissioned first to attempt a truce, and should he fail to conclude it, to then give Colonna leave to do what he chose. In fact Don Ugo could arrange nothing, for Rome was aware of the straits to which the imperial forces were reduced. Accordingly, he indignantly departed on the 20th of June, leaving full powers to Colonna, who proceeded to act without delay. At the head of eight hundred knights, three thousand foot soldiers, and a few pieces of artillery drawn by oxen, he so quickly forced his way into the Eternal City, that Clement VII. had barely time to fly

almost lost patience, and on the 2nd of June despatched three letters to Guicciardini, saying in conclusion : "this is all nonsense, and the Pope does not know what he is saying."[1] And he hotly urged Guicciardini to overcome the Pope's obstinacy, since otherwise nothing would be done but weaken the city and waste a large sum of money. The end of it was that matters were delayed without any work of consequence being completed. When the moment came for measures of practical utility, the enemy was already so near at hand, that Machiavelli was compelled to make repeated journeys to the camp to see Guicciardini, and therefore to frequently interrupt and resume his labours[2] Henceforward all that could be hoped was to find some way of turning aside from Florence the threatening storm that was rapidly drawing near, and to which no effectual resistance could be offered.

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. pp. 203–207. Letters lxx., lxxi., lxxii., of the 2nd of June, 1526.

[2] The Bargagli codex, so frequently quoted by us, contains a letter dated 15th of January, 1526, from the Podestà of Montespertoli to Machiavelli, *provisor murorum*, in answer to the latter's requisition for twenty-five or thirty men to work at the trenches.



by the way, sending troops to besiege Cremona. He thus prevented the army from despatching assistance to Doria, who had blockaded Genoa, and declared that he could take the city, even were it also invested by land.

Guicciardini was the Pontifical Lieutenant in the camp, and was continually writing to Rome to animate the Pope's courage; he did his utmost to keep the army in order, to conciliate the duke and incite him to action; but all was in vain. When convinced of having persuaded that inert leader to march upon Milan, he saw him turn aside for the useless siege of Cremona. When hoping that the Pope was really dedicating his whole energies to the war, he received news of the negotiations for peace. "What a charge is mine," he then exclaimed; "how shameful it were to lose heart at the first difficulties, now, too, that the army is unbroken, that no disorders have taken place, and that we have our foot in the enemy's country."[1] This was the moment of Niccolò Machiavelli's arrival in the camp. The Florentines being consumed by anxiety for the fate of their city, had sent him to examine and report how things were going on. On the road he had received letters from Vettori giving him details of the shameful affair at Sienna. "I can believe," so wrote Vettori, "that other armies may have been put to flight by shouts, but has any one yet seen or read of an army having fled ten miles without a single pursuer? Everything is going to ruin now. When I see how ill things fare at Milan, Cremona and Genoa, how utter was the failure of the expedition to Sienna, it seems to me that with such terrible ill-luck we could not even succeed in forcing our way into an oven."[2]

On the 10th of September Machiavelli was despatched by Guicciardini to the camp before Cremona, in order to see for himself how things were going on, and endeavour to persuade the Venetian Provveditore and the Duke of Urbino, that if they failed to take the city within five or six days, it would be better to raise the siege altogether, and march instead to the attack of Milan and

[1] "Luogotenenza generale per il Papa Clemente VII.," part i., letter of the 31st of July, 1526, in the "Opere Inedite," vol. iv. p. 145

[2] "Opere," vol. viii. pp. 207–215. Letters lxxiii and lxxiv, written by Vettori on the 5th and 7th of August, 1526. While at the camp Machiavelli received other letters from Florence, among which, as though to prevent our forgetting his strangely contradictory character, is one from the same Jacopo Fornaciaio, who had given a performance of the "Clizia" in his own garden. This Jacopo wrote to him of the actress Barbera, concerning whom it would seem that Machiavelli was much occupied even in those days, telling him that she would write to him once a week, since he, Machiavelli, still felt so much interest in her welfare. Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition, document xviii.

with his Swiss guards, and take refuge in the Castle of St. Angelo. The Vatican, St. Peter's, the palaces of the cardinals were sacked, and in a few hours the spoils reached the amount of 300,000 ducats. Here was at once a fatal example given to the Imperialists on the march from Lombardy; but the Cardinal wished to proceed to the farther extremity of laying his hands on the person of the Pontiff. In his alarm, Clement appealed to Moncada, who had re-entered Rome at the heels of the riotous invaders, and who immediately coming forward as mediator, dictated the following conditions of peace:—a four months' truce with the Emperor, the withdrawal of the Papal fleet from Genoa, of the Papal forces from Lombardy, and full amnesty to the Colonna. The Cardinal and his men withdrew to Grottaferrata, frantic with rage, and declaring that they were all betrayed; while the Pope, on his side, accepted the forcibly imposed terms, but determined to violate them at the first opportunity. Of this Don Ugo was quite aware, but was content to gain time for the present. He therefore went to Naples, taking with him as hostage, Filippo Strozzi, a kinsman of the Medici. At the same time, the Pope had to submit to another humiliation. In order, as he alleged, to protect the rear of his army in Lombardy, he had sent a few of his people, together with a multitude of Florentine rabble, to overthrow the government of Sienna. But the Siennese put them to hasty and shameful flight before they had even attempted to strike a blow.

And, as the climax of disaster, all these different news, together with the order to retreat across the Po, reached the Pontifical camp at the moment when, after so many reverses, there seemed to be a dawn of better luck. For until then things had gone very badly there. The Venetians, led by the Duke of Urbino, did not cross the Adda; the expected Swiss did not arrive; and meanwhile the army of landsknechts was increasing in Tirol, under the command of the Protestant Frundsberg, who declared his intention of going to Rome to hang the Pope, and pawned his own estates to pay the Emperor's troops. In Milan a revolt against the Spaniards had been instantly suppressed, without the allies venturing to do anything, although they might have sent twenty thousand men to support the attempt. Finally, many Swiss arrived in small detachments, without any regular contract having been made with the Cantons; but even with these reinforcements, the Duke of Urbino refused to take the field. He desired to have the sole command of the army, complained of everything, and decided on nothing. After making a feint of marching on Milan, in obedience to the general wish, he halted

As for the Duke of Urbino, he had been only too thankful to quit the camp, and instantly went home to his duchess. Meanwhile the force of landsknechts already collected at Botzen, and amounting to ten or twelve thousand men, were constantly increasing and quite prepared to descend into Italy.[1]

Machiavelli then returned to Florence and wrote a report upon the state of affairs. In his judgment, a whole string of blunders had been committed, beginning with the exaggerated confidence in the Milanese revolt which had been so promptly crushed by the Imperialists. Next, they had sent too small a force to besiege Cremona, and this mistake had led to much loss of time and prestige. The Pope had been unwilling to increase his funds by the nomination of new cardinals, and yet had found it impossible to obtain money by other means. "He remained in Rome and let himself be seized as easily as a child, the which has brought things into such a tangle that no one can now unravel them, for he has even withdrawn his soldiery from the camp, and also Messer Francesco Guicciardini, who alone could cope with the infinite disorder. Now several captains are quarrelling so violently with one another that, in default of a leader, they will soon be like a pack of dogs, and consequently all affairs are terribly neglected."[2]

The Spanish fleet had sailed from the port of Carthagena, under the command of Lannoy, the Viceroy of Naples, in order to give battle to Doria; and by November Frundsberg had already entered the province of Brescia, with more than twelve thousand landsknechts. Nevertheless, with the aid of the French galleys, commanded by Pietro Navarro, Doria was able to repulse the enemy by sea. Nor would it have been difficult to drive the landsknechts back to their mountains, inasmuch as they were still at a distance from the main body of the imperial army, and had neither artillery, money, nor provisions. But no one molested them, although the combined forces of the Duke of Urbino and Giovanni dei Medici amounted to 1,600 horse and 19,000 foot. The Germans advanced slowly, and near Mantua were in the midst of the marshes and surrounded by hostile troops, but even then were left unassailed. All this showed that the enslavement

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. iv., letters of the 2nd of October to Roberto Acciaiuoli and to the Datary, pp. 411 and 413; letter of the 19th of October, p. 458; letter of the 7th of November, p. 511; letter of the 9th of November, p. 520.

[2] This report is included in Machiavelli's printed correspondence, under the heading of "*a letter to a friend.*" "Opere," vol. viii pp. 215–219 But from its contents, its form, and from its having been found, as the editors remark, undated, unaddressed, and unsigned, among the documents of the Segreteria Vecchia of Florence, we believe it to be no private letter, but an official report.

the assistance of Doria at Genoa.[1] He wrote one letter from Cremona,[2] and then returned without delay to report that no one was inclined to abandon the siege, which really seemed to be almost at an end. In fact, shortly after this, Cremona surrendered.

Consequently the army was now free. It numbered 20,000 Italians and 13,000 Swiss, without calculating 3,500 others still expected from the Alps. The latter, however, were the regularly enlisted troops, namely, those which had to be paid, not those already in camp, many of whom daily deserted or dispersed. Nevertheless, the enemy was in inferior force and without supplies. Some blow, therefore, might at last be struck. Instead, there came the astounding news of the truce and the orders to Guicciardini to withdraw the Papal contingent across the Pò. He was thunderstruck and wrote to the Datary:[3] "I would rather forsake Italy, than live in Rome in the fashion our master will have to live there, if he goes on in the way you describe. We must not yield, but resist with all our might. How can Cardinal Colonna, with only a thousand men at his heels, have the power to reduce us to so wretched a state, and almost dictate terms to the whole world?"[4] But there was no longer any help for it, and it was necessary to submit. Giovanni dei Medici was now the only general in the pay of the Pope, still remaining in the field. He was engaged to maintain a body of 4,000 foot soldiers and with secret orders to continue the war under colour of being paid by the French. But as a climax to all these ills, this valiant chief was very dissatisfied with the treatment that he had received and threatened to desert to the enemy, unless he were granted a State, according to the promises repeatedly made to him. "And he is quite capable of fulfilling his threat," said Guicciardini, in a letter from Piacenza.

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. p. 456; "Opere Inedite," vol. iv. p. 340, letter of the 9th September, 1526.

[2] "Opere Inedite," vol. iv. p. 367. Guicciardini wrote to Roberto Acciaiuoli that he had forwarded to the Pope Machiavelli's letter, "containing the plan of those entrenchments *not* drawn by the hand of Leonardo de Vinci." I used to think that this *not* was a misprint, but it also exists in the autograph. Guicciardini frequently employed the word *not*, in an affirmative sense, as the following quotations will prove: "Il castello è in pratica di accordo, e *non* ier l'altro fu a parlamento si stretto, che si tenne per fermo doversi concludere ieri con le condivioni," &c. (Ibid., vol. ix. p. 46) "Ma secondo gli avvisi che ho io per due persone, che l'uno partl *non* ier l'altro, l'altro ieri" (Ibid., p. 79.) And it is plain that if the plan had not been drawn by Leonardo, Guicciardini would have expressed himself differently. The design in question must have been made at an earlier period, for Leonardo was then deceased.

[3] "Opere Inedite," vol. iv. pp. 393 and 397, letters of the 24th and 26th of September, 1526.

[4] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 397, letter of the 26th of September, 1526.

Italy from the imminent danger. But although at one moment he began negotiations with the Imperialists, at the next he sent his men across the Neapolitan frontier to attack them, and then again began to arrange terms, only to violate them as soon as they were concluded. Exactly as Guicciardini had foreseen and declared, the Emperor wished to lull the Pope to sleep in order to gain time to become master of Italy. His army was slowly making its way from the north, hindered by a thousand obstacles, by want of money, by continued outbreaks of disorder in the camp and by the inclemency of the season. And before long, it would have, in this state, to force a passage through the snow drifts of the Apennines.

Guicciardini was at Parma and repeatedly wrote to say that there was no means of inducing the Duke of Urbino to attack the enemy; he was either a great traitor, or a great coward; possibly both.[1] In February Machiavelli came to him in great haste,[2] sent for the third time from Florence, to inform him that nothing was to be hoped from negotiation; that the city was quite unfitted to stand a siege, and earnestly begging that it might not be abandoned to the enemy.

Guicciardini led him to the duke at Casal Maggiore, to see whether their united efforts might not spur him to action. But their prayers were in vain. The Duke would neither face, nor precede the enemy; he would only follow him at a distance.[3] There is every reason to think that he was not held back by cowardice alone, as was said and maintained by many; but probably by secret instructions from Venice, who seemed by no means unwilling to see the Pope crushed and humiliated, instead of becoming powerful and menacing through the gain of some victories. It is certain that Guicciardini was entirely justified in

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. v. "Luogotenenza generale," part ii., letters of December, 1526, and of January and February, 1527.

[2] "Opere," vol viii. p 231, letter from Forlì, 16th of April, 1527. In the State Archives of Modena ("Registri ducali," compartment 1) there are duplicate copies of the letters of Filippo dei Nerli, who then governed Modena for the Pope. These letters also make reference to Machiavelli, and frequently betray Nerli's scanty liking for him, whom he styled "Il Machia." On the 7th of October, 1525, Nerli wrote to Guicciardini: "Camurana, the bearer of the letter, will have supplemented it by explaining to your Lordship, that your least commands are more esteemed by me than all that may have been written by Alessandro del Caccia, especially as the latter in his letter quotes the authority of Il Machia." And on the 31st of October, 1526, he wrote to the same: "The open letter sent by your Lordship, shall be forwarded to Machiavello by the next courier that passes, for, having to write myself at this time, I would not that this chatter should make the courier delay." These different letters show that Machiavelli was unweariedly travelling by day and night, sometimes alone and sometimes with an armed escort, backwards and forwards between the two hostile armies

[3] "Opere Inedite," vol. v. p 203, letter of the 7th of February, 1527.

of Italy was now inevitable. Nevertheless, so bad was the condition of the imperial forces, that in all probability they might have disbanded even without being attacked, but for the arrival of unexpected succour. The Duke of Ferrara, possessor of the finest artillery of the period, was geographically qualified to decide the fate of the war, and the Pope had committed the gross folly of offending, repulsing, and irritating him, exactly when it was of supreme importance to secure his friendship. Accordingly, he furnished the Germans with money and a few pieces of artillery, which came at the moment when they were most needed. For Giovanni dei Medici, being weary of his forced inaction, began a skirmish with his own troops alone, and made a daring onslaught upon the enemy whom he believed to be unprovided with guns. But the second shot fired by them shattered his leg so seriously that five days afterwards he was dead. And thus the Pope was deprived of his only efficient captain.

The truce was now practically at an end and the war already recommenced. Machiavelli returned in haste to the camp, to explain to the Lieutenant the wretched condition of Florence, which, unless help were given, would be totally unable to make any resistance to the enemy's attack.[1] But Guicciardini was obliged to reply that the forces of the League were so scattered, that even on an emergency it would be impossible for him to march more than six or seven thousand of the Papal infantry to the relief of the city. Accordingly the Florentines must make the best preparations in their power; and in case they might decide on attempting to conclude peace, it were better that they or the Pope should treat directly with the Viceroy, upon whom, as the representative of the Emperor, all the others depended. And after communicating this news by letter, Machiavelli instantly made his way back to Florence.[2]

Meanwhile, bands of Germans and Spaniards were continually leaving Milan to join the landsknechts. The Constable de Bourbon did the same, after first using threats to Morone to extract more money from him, and then nominating him his counsellor. Thus the imperial forces had swelled to the number of 30,000, and on receiving a second supply of money and ammunition from the Duke of Ferrara, left Piacenza and set out towards Bologna. As for the Pope, he was still hesitating between peace and war. The Florentines promised him as much as 150,000 ducats, if he could succeed in concluding a fixed agreement that would deliver all

[1] "Opere," vol. vii pp 459–461. "Istruzione degli Otto di Pratica a Machiavelli."

[2] Ibid., vol. vii. p. 464; letter of the 2nd of December, from Modena, 1526.

scripts extended to the East and the West, for he gave letters and commissions to all travelling Florentines and those resident in foreign countries A frugal liver, he spent his whole fortune, and ran heavily into debt, in order to purchase books. His energy was so great that applications were made to him from all quarters respecting ancient codices, and it is chiefly owing to him that Florence then became the great book centre of the world, and possessed librarians as intelligent as Vespasiano Bisticci, who was also the biographer of all the learned men of his day. Niccoli was also most indefatigable in attracting the most reputed scholars of Italy to Florence, in order to have them employed in the Florentine University,[1] or in other ways. It was through his efforts that Leonardo Bruni, Carlo Marsuppini, Poggio Bracciolini Traversari, Crisolora, Guarino, Filelfo, were summoned to Florence and given employment. But being of an irritable disposition, his friendship easily changed to aversion, he then persecuted those whom he had previously protected, and as he enjoyed the favour of the Medici, his power of persecution was very great. To him and to Palla Strozzi is to be ascribed the reform of the Florentine University, and the encouragement of the study of Greek. So intense was his ardour for the propagation of learning, that after the fashion of a religious missionary, he would stop rich young Florentines in the street, exhorting them to devote themselves to *virtue*, *i e.*, to Greek and Latin literature. Piero dei Pazzi, a youth who only lived, as he himself said, to enjoy himself ("per darsi bel tempo"), was one of his converts, and became a man of learning.[2]

Niccoli's house was a museum and ancient library, Niccoli himself, a living bibliographical encyclopedia He had a collection of eight hundred codices, valued at six thousand florins.[3] In these days it is easy to realize the importance of a good library in an age when printing was unknown, and the price of a single manuscript was very often quite beyond the means of students, even when they knew where to seek it. Niccoli's library was thrown open to all, and all came to his house to study, to make researches, to copy, to ask help and counsel that was never withheld. Even at his frugal table he surrounded himself with objects

[1] Then known as the Studio Fiorentino.

[2] *Vide* Vespasiano's "Vita dei Piero dei Pazzi."

[3] In his "Vita di N. Niccoli," 8th paragraph, Vespasiano gives the number of volumes at eight hundred; other writers state that they barely exceeded six hundred. Poggio Bracciolini (see preface to Salutati's "Invectiva," before cited, p 27) also says that they were eight hundred. Neither can their precise value be ascertained.

writing: "Here we do naught but predict and hold for certain every possible danger to ourselves, and every possible design on the part of the enemy, who, even could he read our thoughts, would never conceive half the projects we attribute to him." [1] Nevertheless, Guicciardini also assured Machiavelli that should the Imperialists enter Tuscany, he would send the Papal troops on in advance, to cover Florence, even should the duke persist in remaining in the rear.[2]

Machiavelli sent all this news to the Eight, and repeatedly wrote from Parma, that it was impossible to divine the enemies' intentions, since they did not seem to know these themselves. It would have been very easy to put them to flight, if the confusion of the League and the inaction of the Duke of Urbino had not ruined everything. And in March he wrote from Bologna, where he was staying with Guicciardini, to say that the Imperialists were already close to the walls, had been assisted for the second time by the Duke of Ferrara, who was destined to be the arbiter of the war, and that they seemed resolved to invade Tuscany.[3] The hostile army demanded provisions and desired to enter Bologna; but Guicciardini had only replied by closing the gates, and the Imperialists had threatened him in vain and attempted to use violent means.

The Lieutenant was now engrossed, not only by the dangerous position of the Pope, but by the still more imminent peril to the city of Florence. To induce the Duke of Urbino to give it timely succour, he had assumed the grave responsibility of ceding to him the lands of San Leo which the Florentines had always promised but never given to him.[4] But fortunately the worst danger now seemed to be averted, by the imperial troops showing signs of marching straight upon Rome. Meanwhile there was increasing disorder in their ranks. Towards the middle of March there was a positive mutiny in the camp that lasted for several days, and the Constable de Bourbon was obliged to conceal himself to escape the fury of the men. Frundsberg, on the contrary, determined to face it, and on the 16th attempted to harangue his landsknechts; but they replied by thrusting the points of their halberds in his face, and ferociously insisting upon immediate payment. The valiant captain was so highly enraged by this

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. v. pp. 217 and 227, letters of the 9th and 15th of February.

[2] Ibid., vol. v. p. 203, letter of the 7th of February.

[3] Ibid, vol vii p 471 and fol. These are the despatches of the third expedition to Guicciardini, which, in the "Opere," are erroneously attributed to the second.

[4] "Opere Inedite," vol v p. 242 and fol, letter of the 20th of February, 1527.

indignity that he was seized with an apoplectic attack; he sank upon a drum and fell back a corpse. But even at that moment the Duke of Urbino refused to risk an attack.

Meanwhile, news arrived from Rome that a truce had been concluded between the Viceroy and the Pope. The latter was bound to restore the property of the Colonna; to withdraw his troops from Naples; to relinquish that kingdom to Charles V., Milan to Sforza, and to give 60,000 ducats to the Constable de Bourbon, who would thereupon withdraw his army from the States of the Church and even from Italy, provided that France and Venice should agree to the terms. The Romans were furious, for they had already flown to arms. But the Pope, who could no longer support the enormous expenses, and was most sparing of his money, only waited for the signing of the treaty by the Viceroy on the 25th of March, and then instantly dismissed a considerable number of his soldiers in Rome, in order to save 30,000 ducats per month. Accordingly the city was left without means of defence, and the Constable, having secret orders to continue his march, at once wrote to the Viceroy that 60,000 ducats was too small a sum for his army, which refused to accept the truce; and that it would be useless for him or any one else to attempt to arrest its march. In fact, on the 31st of March, he passed the river Reno near Bologna and started on his way south.

Guicciardini no longer knew either what to say, or what course to adopt; and to increase his bewilderment, Morone now wrote to inform him, that, on instant receipt of the sum of 3,000 ducats, needed for the release of one of his sons who was held as a hostage, he was ready to betray the Imperialists, and thus throw them into the greatest confusion.[1] The Lieutenant knew his man too well to deem it worth while to send any reply. But he wrote to Rome, in a strain of the deepest melancholy, to express his conviction that it was a fatal error to think of a truce when they ought to be preparing for resistance. "I know not if

[1] Morone had been unable to pay the whole ransom exacted of 20,000 ducats. At the time of his release he still owed 6,000 ducats, and left his son Antonio in pledge for their payment. Later, when the imperial army was much pressed for money, he contrived to obtain 3,000 ducats more, but had to leave his son Giovanni as hostage for them. For this reason, the Constable set Antonio at liberty, and released Morone from his bond for the remaining 3,000 ducats promised by him. But his son Giovanni was still held in pledge for the sum that Morone now sought to fraudulently obtain from Guicciardini, in order, perhaps, to give it to the Imperialists. *Vide* Dandolo, "Ricordi," pp 266, 267; "Opere Inedite," vol. v. p 363, letter of the 26th of March. In the "Storia d'Italia" (vol ix. lib xviii. ch. 1. p. 25), Guicciardini also speaks of other practices that Morone "deceitfully and fraudulently" attempted to carry on with members of the League.

necessity will at last dispel our uncertainties. Our foes demand of our Lord and of ourselves all that we possess, nor do they only assail temporal things: they likewise destroy the churches, profane the sacraments, and introduce heresies into the faith of Christ. And if these things be not considered by him who can and ought to endeavour to remedy them, I hold him guilty of the same infamy and offence against God."[1] Machiavelli was writing to Florence to the same effect, and after announcing that the Pope wished to make the Florentines disburse the 60,000 ducats promised by him to the Imperialists, he added: "And we must find the money and make this last attempt to save our country. If the truce be really made, the money will gain us time and at least defer our destruction, and if the truce be not concluded, then it will help us to carry on the war."[2]

But it was already known in Florence that Bourbon had refused to accept the truce. When replying that the sum promised him was too small, he had not said how much more he should require. A messenger of his sent to the city, whither the Viceroy came expressly to meet him, made an agreement for 150,000 ducats, promising that the army should begin its retreat as soon as the first 80,000 ducats were paid. But the Constable had not yet given his formal consent to the bargain, and therefore Machiavelli wrote that it would now be better to prepare for war[3] What terms can you hope to make with enemies, who, while still on the further side of the mountains, and with our own troops still under arms, demand 100,000 ducats of you within three days, and 50,000 more within ten? When once within reach of you they will exact all that you possess. There is no resource but resistance, and therefore it is better to resist them among the mountains than close beneath these walls[4]

Although snow storms and rocks still barred the progress of the army, and there was still some talk of coming to terms, and of the ever-increasing sums necessary to obtain them, yet, having no further business in Bologna, Machiavelli set out on his return to Florence, and on the 16th of April wrote to Vettori from Forlì: "Should Bourbon pursue his march, we must decide upon war and discard all thoughts of peace. Should he remain stationary we must absolutely make peace, without thinking of war. But if driven to war, we must no longer drag our steps, but press forward with desperate haste, since frequently despair

1 "Opere Inedite," vol. v. p. 415, letter of the 19th of April, 1527.
2 "Opere," vol. vii. p 489, letter from Bologna, 23rd of March, 1527.
3 Ibid, vol. vii. p. 496, letter from Bologna, 30th of March, 1527.
4 Ibid, vol. vii. p. 498, letter from Bologna, 2nd of April, 1527.

find remedies such as were never to be found by deliberation. ear love to Messer Francesco Guicciardini, love to my country, l I tell you on the strength of the experience earned by fifty- years of life, that I do not think that there has ever been a der travail than this, when peace is a necessity, yet war cannot avoided; and when we are burdened by a prince who can ther decide wholly for peace nor wholly for war."

On the 18th, from Brisighella, he addressed another letter to same correspondent, in a tone of still greater uncertainty, and n proceeded to Florence, where he might still be of service, d was awaited by his family with the utmost anxiety. His wife d children were in great dread of the landsknechts and aniards, and had already moved nearly everything from the la. Machiavelli had promised to join them in time, in case pressing danger. On the 2nd of April, he concluded an ectionate letter from Forlì, to his son Guido, with these words: Salute Monna Marietta, and tell her that I have been almost ily on the point of setting out, and am thinking of it now, and ver had so great a desire to be in Florence; and that it is no ılt of mine if I have not come. Only tell her (your mother) at no matter what news she may hear, she is to be of good eer, for that I shall arrive before any trouble occurs." [1]

His son, who was still in his boyhood, sent an answer on the th, saying that they were all much rejoiced by his promise. it he must be sure to warn them at once if the landsknechts re coming, so as to have time to carry everything out of the use.[2] This letter, traced in big and almost infantile characters, s preserved by Machiavelli, who returned to his family accord- to his promise.

The citizens of Florence had been prepared for every sacrifice order to avert the danger by which they were threatened. ney had quickly collected and despatched the first 80,000 ducats omised to Bourbon by the Pope; they were melting the gold d silver plate of their churches in order to get together the mainder. But their messengers received news by the road that e terms had not even been accepted, and had barely time to scue their precious burden and bring it back with them to orence. Accordingly, nothing could now be thought of save eans of defence. But there were very few soldiers in the city, d the fortification works, although frequently urged on by achiavelli, could hardly be said to be really begun. The

[1] "Opere," vol viii. p. 226, letter lxxx.

[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 21. Appendix (III.) of the Italian tion, document xix.

inhabitants were heartily discontented with Cardinal Passerini, who listened to no advice and did nothing. "The whole evil," wrote Guicciardini, who was also in Florence at this moment, "is caused by the ignorance of that great oaf, who concerns himself about trifles and neglects matters of importance. He will not permit others to attend to them, and can do nothing himself. He only thinks of protecting the abode of the Medici and the palace ; he neglects the government, and does not perceive what ruin he is causing. Oh God! What pain to behold so much confusion!"[1]

Guicciardini had succeeded in bringing the army of the League into the vicinity of Florence, and this had the effect of deciding the imperial forces to continue their march towards Rome. But the former army, although friendly, did not refrain from pillaging the territory, and accordingly the discontent of the Florentines was always on the increase. In fact, a quarrel occurring on the 26th of April, between a citizen and a soldier, sufficed to bring about a general disturbance, in which the people riotously clamoured for arms. It chanced at this moment that Passerini had just mounted his horse, in the company of the Cardinals Ridolfi, Cibo, and Ippolito dei Medici, in order to ride forth to meet the Duke of Urbino, who, together with the Venetian *provveditori* and the Lieutenant, had fixed his quarters at a villa a few miles from the city. Passerini, determining to show his contempt for the riot, rode on without even inquiring as to its object or gravity. This caused a rumour that the Medici and their representatives had fled from the city ; accordingly the palace was invaded by a crowd shouting : "Popolo e libertà." Many influential citizens hastened to the spot ; the disturbance assumed serious proportions ; insulting cries were heard, and more than one dagger-blow was struck. The rioters finally proclaimed the deposition of the Medicean government and the re-establishment of the Republic. But the Cardinal, receiving timely warning of what was going on, hastened back with some of the Duke's harquebusiers ; the Piazza was occupied by the soldiery ; the doors of the palace were closed, and the Medicean guards, who had concealed themselves, left their hiding-places and tried to force the bolts with their pikes. Revolution and bloodshed appeared to be imminent ; but the citizens shut up in the palace contented themselves with hurling a few tiles from the windows, and these fell at a distance without injuring any one. Jacopo Nardi then showed how the coping of the balustrade could be dislodged, and let some of the stones fall on the soldiers, where-

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. v, letter of the 26th and 29th of April, from Florence.

upon the latter drew off[1] Neither party much desired to fight in earnest, and rather sought to bring the affair to a speedy end. It was impossible to defend the palace without weapons, and neither was it easy to force its doors without delay. Besides, were it taken by storm, the citizens inside would certainly be killed, and this would increase the disturbance in the city. Accordingly, Francesco Guicciardini, whose brother, the Gonfalonier, was shut in with the rest, and Federigo da Bozzolo at last appeared with a written promise of a general amnesty, and all ended with the election of a new Signory. Undoubtedly, had the Pope's affairs been going less badly, he would soon have wreaked a cruel revenge, but for the moment there was nothing to fear, since he was absorbed by affairs of a graver sort.[2]

The imperial army had continued its march towards Rome, and as usual was followed, at a respectful distance, by that of the League. The Duke of Urbino gave the signal for departure, and marched his men through the city; and all Florence felt amazed that troops so well drilled and well armed should be incapable of facing the enemy, and only equal to laying waste the lands and pillaging the dwellings of their allies. With infinite reluctance Guicciardini, too, was compelled to accompany the grievous and shameful march. On the 8th of May, when at Castello della Pieve, he received the fatal news that the enemy, after a few hours' fight, had stormed the gates of the Eternal City, were engaged in sacking it, and that the Pope was shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo Meanwhile the Duke of Urbino had marched against Perugia to overthrow its government, instead of pursuing the enemy. In vain the Lieutenant now did all in his power to induce him to make at least one final effort In vain he sent despatches to Passerini urging him to send troops from Florence to attempt the Pope's liberation by means of some daring stroke. "The unhappy man is confined in the castle with no hope but in your assistance, and implores it in terms that might move stones to tears. But you do not even send him a word of reply. As I hope for God's mercy, I would rather perish than witness this great cruelty. You are so engrossed by anxiety for the palace and people of Florence, that you are oblivious of all else Nevertheless, if the Pope be lost, your cares

[1] One of these stones fell upon Michel Angelo's David, and broke the left arm into three pieces, which were afterwards put together again.

[2] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii. p. 133 and fol.; Nerli, "Commentari," p. 148; Varchi, "Storia," vol i. p 130 and fol.; Guicciardini, "Storia," vol ix bk. xviii. p. 41 and fol.; "Opere Inedite," vol. v. p 423 and fol.

will go for nothing, since in losing him we lose the soul of our body." [1]

And soon after he wrote to say that there was nothing more to hope for any one; the Pope would come to terms of some sort with his adversaries, and these would inevitably turn their arms against Florence. [2]

The news of the taking and sack of Rome and the consequent danger of the war being carried into Tuscany, reached Florence on the 11th of May. The first thought of every one was to get rid of Cardinal Passerini, from whose rule no good was to be expected. This time there was a general disturbance, in which all the more noted citizens, including Filippo Strozzi, the kinsman of the Medici, took part. Passerini was soon convinced that there was nothing to be done, and went away with Ippolito and Alessandro dei Medici. The Republic was proclaimed on the 16th of May, and it was then hastily decided to convoke for the 20th of the same month both the Council of Eighty and the Great Council, in order to nominate, for one year only, a Gonfalonier, whose term of office might, however, be renewed. The partition walls which had been run up in the Hall of the Great Council to form chambers for the accommodation of the Medici's guards, were demolished by the scions of the noblest families of Florence, who enthusiastically set to work trundling barrows of stones and mortar.

On the 1st of June the Gonfalonier Niccolò Capponi entered office with the new Signory. The new Eight of Balìa were elected, and the Eight of *Pratica* suppressed and replaced, as in Soderini's day, by the Ten of War. Every one appeared satisfied with the restoration of liberty; but there was not a moment to spare. Instant preparations must be made for defence, inasmuch as the imperial forces, after devastating Rome, would certainly attack Florence on their way to the north. In one way or another the Pope would come to some agreement with the Emperor, and both would desire to wreak their revenge upon the resuscitated Republic. De Leyva had long promised his soldiery to let them measure the brocades of Florence with their pikes, and the whole army was voracious for spoil.

Accordingly the Florentines began to discuss the means of arming all able-bodied citizens in their country's defence, of procuring worthy captains, and of fortifying the city walls, not in accordance with the fantastic projects of the Pope, but after the

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol ix.; "La prigionia di Clemente VII. e la caduta della Repubblica fiorentina," p. 10, letter of the 18th of May, 1527.

[2] "Opere Inedite," vol ix.; letters of the 21st and 26th of May, 1527.

plans of competent persons And before long the design sent by Michel Angelo Buonarotti arrived, "and even won the praise and approval of military men."[1] The ardour of the citizens grew hotter from day to day; it was plain that, at last, they were really nerved to desperate efforts. All this, however, was the prologue to a fresh drama, with which we have here no concern; the siege and heroic defence of Florence being outside the limits of the present history.

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. ii. p. 161.





CHAPTER XVIII.

Machiavelli is sent to the camp near Rome—His return to Florence—Fresh calamities and new sorrows—His illness and death—His will—A dream attributed to Machiavelli.



THERE now was Machiavelli, the *provisor murorum*, who, although with scanty success, had so strenuously laboured to fortify the walls of his native city, and in the endeavour to save it from attack and pillage by the imperial forces, had made so many journeys through Italy? During the first week in May, he had been sent with Francesco Bandini on a mission to Guicciardini, who was now within the Papal territories, and continually drawing nearer to Rome, in the vain hope of at least securing the personal safety of the Pope. The Florentine envoys were commissioned to investigate the state of affairs, and ask, in the name of Passerini and of the government, whether something could not be done to assist his Holiness. But, in truth, Florence had neither the wish nor the power to do anything. Guicciardini at once sent the envoys to Civita Vecchia, where Andrea Doria, the admiral of the Papal fleet, was then to be found, to inquire concerning his plans for the deliverance of the Pope. They were also to beg him to succour the army by at least sending the promised stores, since the soldiers were starving and threatening to disband from one moment to another. On the 22nd of May, Machiavelli and Bandini wrote that Doria could neither employ his vessels in the transport of provisions nor for any other use, being obliged to keep them in readiness for the Pope, who might need them at any moment,

should he succeed in escaping from the castle. Therefore the admiral only placed a brigantine and a galley at their disposal; but these they might use for any purpose, and even for their conveyance back to Leghorn. He approved the idea of the sudden attack planned by Guicciardini for the release of the Pope, but seemed to have but little hope of its success.[1] And this is the last letter penned by Machiavelli that remains to us. In consequence of the revolution and change of government in Florence, he could no longer act in an official capacity. He hastened, therefore, to return to his native city, whither Guicciardini was soon to follow him

These two great Italians were now in a most difficult position. Guicciardini, the adversary of popular government, and connected by indissoluble ties with the destinies of the Pope and the Medici, whom he had served with fidelity and intelligence, found Florence in the power of his enemies, was speedily obliged to withdraw into voluntary exile, and deemed himself fortunate to escape the confiscation of his property. But unhappy as was his situation it had at least the advantage of being well-defined and decisive. He could do nothing but hope and await the return of the Medici, through whom alone could his fortunes be re-established. Machiavelli, on the contrary, found himself in a very different and far worse position. Although a sincere republican, he had first fallen into disgrace upon the overthrow of liberty. After many misfortunes and severe embarrassments, he had at last obtained some insignificant employment from the Medici at the moment when their own fate was identified with the general desire to save the country from foreign devastation. To this end he had laboured with almost youthful vigour, had expended all the activity and energy of his last years, although now nearly sixty years of age and with very broken health. By day and by night, in winter frosts and summer heats, in danger from hostile troops and exposed to numerous other risks, he had never granted himself any rest. Now, all at once, on his return to Florence, he involuntarily but inevitably appeared in the light of a foe to the freedom that he had so passionately worshipped, and of the independence of the city to which he had devoted his best strength. For he returned there as the servant of tyrants who had just been expelled. What, then, could he hope?

Accordingly it cannot astonish us to learn from the accounts in Busini's letters, that Machiavelli was often heard to sigh very bitterly when returning to Florence with Pietro Carnesecchi and the latter's sister.[2] Certainly, however, his sighs were not caused,

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. p 509.

[2] Busini, "Lettere," pp 84, 85, letter ix.

of antiquity, and Vespasiano tells us, that "it was a rare sight to see how ancient he made himself."[1] The frivolous points of his character, and the somewhat ludicrous scandals of his private life, caused by a female servant who ruled him entirely, were passed over on account of his sincere, constant, and disinterested zeal for letters When on his death-bed, at the age of seventy-three, in 1437, his only anxiety was to guarantee to the public the free use of his books, which, in fact, formed the first public library in Europe. This was owing to the care of his executors and the munificence of Cosimo dei Medici, who renounced his credit of five hundred florins, paid other of Niccoli's debts, and retaining a portion of the codices for himself, placed four hundred of them in S. Marco for the public use, and afterwards increased their number at his own expense[2]

A third resort of learned men was the convent of the Angioli, the abode of Ambrogio Traversari, native of Portico, in Romagna,

[1] Vespasiano.

[2] *Vide* Vespasiano, "Vita di N Niccoli"; Mehus, "Ambr. Camaldulensis Epist." prefatio, pp. 31, 63, 82; Tiraboschi, vol. vii p. 125, and fol. Cosimo dei Medici had the books placed in St. Mark's in the year 1444 in the grand hall built at his expense by the Architect Michelozzi, which was restored and enlarged after the earthquake of 1433 (P. Marchese, "Scritti Varii": Firenze, Le Monnier, 1855, p 135). Later, that is after the overthrow of Piero dei Medici, in 1494, the friars of St. Mark's bought the codices in the private library of the Medici, which were afterwards bought back by Cardinal Giovanni dei Medici, who later became Pope Leo X. At his death, Cardinal Giulio dei Medici, afterwards Pope Clement VII., his executor, carried them back to Florence, and commissioned Michael Angelo with the construction of the building in which they were to be placed, in the cloister of St. Lorenzo. The edifice was completed under Cosimo I., after the death of Clement VII, and thus was founded the famous Laurentian library. According to Padre Marchese, Cosimo dei Medici, having paid Niccoli's debts, and added codices of his own to those of his deceased friend in St. Mark's, his sons and grandsons had a certain right over them, and, therefore, when they re-purchased from the brethren the private Medici collection, they included among them many of Niccoli's. Upon the history of these collections various notices are to be found in Vespasiano's "Vita di N. Niccoli" and "Vita di Cosimo di Medici"; Tiraboschi, vol vi. p. 128, and fol.; "Poggio Opp."; Basle, 1538, p 270, and fol; Mehus, "Ambr. Camaldulensis Epist," prefatio, p. lxiii, and fol., lxxvi, and fol.; P. Marchese, "Scritti Varii," p. 45, and fol. I have already published several documents in my "Storia di Frate G. Savonarola ed i suoi tempi." A short report—"Delle Biblioteca Mediceo, Laureziana di Firenze," Firenze, Tofani, 1872—was published by the librarian, Cav. Ferrucci, and its author, Signor Anziani, under-librarian. But everything relating to the history of the private Medici collection has been narrated at length and illustrated by new and important documents by Professor E. Piccolomini, in the "Archivio Storico," vol. xix., 1, 2, and 3 Nos. of 1874, and vol. xx. No. 4 of 1874. This same work has also been published separately, and entitled—"Intorno alle condizioni ed alle vicende della libréria Medicea privata," by E. Piccolomini: Firenze, Cellini and Co, 1875.

relief; he was seized with violent spasms of the stomach, and his last hour rapidly approached. Wife, children, and friends were gathered round his bed. On the 22nd of June he expired. "He consented to confess his sins to Frà Matteo, who stayed with him to the end." So wrote his son Piero in a letter to a friend, concluding the brief account with the words: "as you know, he has left us in the utmost poverty."[1] We need not be surprised that Machiavelli should have consented to see a confessor, notwithstanding his many diatribes against popes, priests, and friars. It was a common practice of the time. Besides, although he had frequently inveighed against the corruption of the clergy, and the evils wrought upon Italy by the Church, he had never attacked the dogmas of the faith, and never indeed discussed them.

In 1522, Machiavelli made a second will,[2] constituting his four sons, Bernardo, Lodovico, Guido, and Piero his heirs; to his daughter Bartolommea, or Baccia, afterwards married to Giovanni, father of Giuliano dei Ricci, he left, according to custom, nothing save her maintenance, to which indeed she was legally entitled. We are ignorant whether he had succeeded in securing her a small dowry in the *Monte delle Fanciulle*, although his intention of so doing is mentioned in the will. His wife, Marietta, was referred to in terms of sincere and unaltered affection, and named executrix and guardian to his younger children.

But notwithstanding his Christian death and the love manifested by him to the last towards his wife and family, all sorts of stories of various degrees of malignity were naturally circulated by the detractors of Machiavelli, who did not respect even his dying moments. Giovio stated in his "Elogia" that Machiavelli had died with a jest on his lips, and from an overdose of the medicine that he thought a specific for every complaint. Busini, too, who had always been hostile to him, said in writing to Varchi in 1549, that Machiavelli had died partly from natural causes, and partly from grief at the election of Donato Giannotti to an office he coveted for himself. This, as we have already seen, was totally untrue. He also added that, on falling ill, Machiavelli instantly took his usual pills and finding himself grow rapidly worse, "told his famous dream to Filippo (Strozzi), Francesco del Nero, Jacopo Nardi and others, and then reluctantly died, cutting jokes to the last."[3] Busini, however, does not say in what this celebrated dream consisted, nor do we find any mention of it in

[1] The letter is not dated and is addressed to Francesco Nelli, Professor at Pisa, and a kinsman of Machiavelli It is in the "Opere," vol. i. p. cxxix.

[2] Both wills are included in the "Opere," vol i pp 133-138 and 139-144.

[3] Busini, "Lettere," letter ix. pp 84,

as Busini ill-naturedly supposes, by regret for the revival of freedom, but, on the contrary, by grief that he should be naturally regarded as its opponent. Now was the moment to strengthen the fortifications, arm the inhabitants, and encourage them by means of free institutions to heroic self-sacrifice in the defence of their country. These were the very things Machiavelli had always preached, always desired, always hoped to accomplish; yet he was now held excluded from them, and considered as their opponent.

In fact, the moment he arrived, he found that while all were engaged in reconstituting the Republic and preparing for its defence, no one referred to him; but that all, on the contrary, either distrusted or avoided him. The friends of the Medici went either into exile or hiding; and those who had managed to desert their party in time and were thought to be ardent supporters of the new government, could not be expected to remember Machiavelli, who had no aptitude for playing the tribune nor for ostentatiously changing his livery and course of action. All this was deeply afflicting to him; and an acuter pang was added on receiving a positive proof of that which he had foreseen. On the 10th of June, the Eight of *Pratica* being abolished and the Ten of War reconstituted, Michelozzi was dismissed from the secretaryship and another was to be named in his place. Machiavelli had filled that post most honourably in Soderini's time; he had recently superintended the fortifications of the walls while holding a similar office, it was therefore natural to hope that he might now be called upon to fill it again. But by a decree of the 10th of June, a certain Francesco Tarugi was nominated to the vacant Secretaryship of the Ten, without any one seeming to retain the least remembrance of the former colleague of Marcello and Soderini.[1] This finally convinced him that his career was at an end. To be prohibited from serving his country, from serving the cause of liberty that he had so ardently loved and for which he had suffered so much, was a blow that Niccolò Machiavelli could not survive.

Whether this disappointment was the only immediate cause of his death, cannot be ascertained. He had a long-standing disorder of the digestive organs, but it is certain that on the 20th of June, a few days after the nomination of Tarugi, he fell seriously ill. He took his accustomed remedy, but this time it failed to give

[1] *Vide* appendix to the Italian edition, document xv. This proves that Donato Giannotti was only named secretary in October, 1527, that is after Tarugi and Machiavelli were both deceased, and shows, therefore, that there was no truth in the rumour of Machiavelli having died of grief on finding Giannotti elected in his stead.

words show us that there had been already much talk of the pretended dream, although as yet of only a vague and indefinite kind. Rather than a dream, it seems to us to be a sufficiently exact parody of Machiavelli's pagan spirit. As an instance, we may quote a speech from the beginning of the fourth act of "La Mandragola," where Callimaco, despairing of the success of his illicit love, says to himself: "On the other hand the worst that can befall thee, is to die and go to hell. Many others have died before thee, and many worthy men are in hell. Why, then, shouldst thou be ashamed to go there in thy turn?" These expressions, and many others of the same kind in the "Storie" and the "Discorsi," especially wherever comparisons are drawn between Pagan creeds and Christianity, might have given origin to this fictitious dream. Nor is it impossible that in happier times Machiavelli himself may have related it as a joke, but we cannot suppose that he would have done so in the hour of his death. It is certain that Francesco Ottomano, the oldest authority cited by Bayle, wrote concerning this dream in 1580, but merely saying that he had read in another author how Machiavelli had declared in a certain part of his works that, when he died, he would rather go to Hell than to Paradise. For in the latter he would meet no one but wretched monks and apostles, whereas in Hell he would be in the company of cardinals, popes, princes, and kings.[1] This would tend to prove that the dream was invented by Machiavelli's adversaries, in order to censure certain opinions of his held to be unchristian

Machiavelli's remains were laid in Santa Croce, in the private

gravité et de majesté. on les voyoit comme un Sénat, où on traitoit d'affaires d'Estat, et fort serieuses: il entrevit Platon, Seneque, Plutarque, Tacite, et d'autres de cetté qualité. Il demanda qui estoient ces Messieurs là si venerables; on lui dit que c'estoient les damnés, et que c'estoient des ames reprouvées du Ciel *Sapientia hujus sæculi inimica est Dei.* Celà estant passé, on luy demanda desquels il vouloit estre. Il respondit qu'il aimait beaucoup mieux estre en Enfer avec ces grands esprits, pour déviser avec eux des affaires d'Estat, que d'estre avec cette vermine de ces belistres qu'on luy avoit fait voir. Et à tant il mourut, et alla voir comme vont les affaires d'Estat de l'autre monde."

[1] "Wolphius, nuper Augustæ mortuus, in suis 'Commentariis in Tusculanas,' quos anno superiore mihi donavit, Machiavellum scelerum, impietatum et flagitiorum omnium magistrum appellat, ac testatur illum, quodam loco scripsisse: sibi multo optabilius esse post mortem ad inferos et diabolos detrudi quam in coelum ascendere. Nam hic nullos reperturum nisi mendiculos et misellos quosdam monachos, heremitas, apostolos; illic victurum se cum cardinalibus, cum papis, regibus, et principibus" (Epistola Francisci Hotomani, 28 dec. 1580, No. 99 Francisci et Joanis Hotomanorum, "Epistolæ," Amstelodami, 1700).

See likewise Baldelli in his "Elogio" of Machiavelli, note 16. We have failed to discover the work of Wolphius, quoted by Ottomano, and do not know whether it has been printed or not.

contemporary writers. Ricci, after severely censuring the terms in which Giovio seemed to allude to profane jests upon religious subjects uttered by Machiavelli in his last moments, declared the whole account to be false and calumnious. He likewise added that the medicine used by his grandfather was very mild, and that Machiavelli had died the death of a Christian, surrounded by his family and friends. Neither Marietta nor any of the children, including Baccia, the mother of Ricci, had ever made the least allusion to these false reports.[1]

After all, there was nothing extraordinary in the fact of his death. He was advanced in years; had been recently exposed to many hardships, travelling by night and day in all weathers. He had returned to Florence, after crossing the Roman Campagna on the way, at a season when the climate begins to be very dangerous; he had long been agitated by continual mental suffering, which had been greatly aggravated of late. All this was more than sufficient to account for his death, without requiring any special explanation, and it is impossible to suppose that he could have had any disposition to jest in the presence of his confessor and of the wife and children whom he was leaving for ever.

Nevertheless, the dream unknown to those who attended his deathbed, was actually related by an after generation. According to their account, Machiavelli beheld in his sleep a crowd of famished and miserable people. On asking who they were he was told: the blessed souls in Paradise. Hardly had they vanished from his view than he saw instead a throng of grave-visaged men discussing political matters, and distinguished among them many illustrious philosophers of Greece and Rome. These were the souls condemned to eternal punishment. Being asked in which company he preferred to remain, he instantly replied: I would rather be in Hell and converse with great minds upon State questions, than live in Paradise with the rabble I saw just now. It is hard to decide who could have been the first to relate this dream. Bayle gives a long account of it in his Dictionary, but only quotes authors of a date long posterior to Machiavelli's time, and among them Binet the Jesuit.[2] Nevertheless, Busini's

[1] *Vide* the Ricci Codex, p 193

[2] Stephen Binet, of Dijon (1569–1639). At p. 359 of his work, "Du Salut d'Origène," he relates the dream, without giving any authority for it. These are his words: "On arrive a ce détestable poinct d'honneur, où arriva Machiavel sur la fin de sa vie: car il eut cetté illusion peu devant que rendre son esprit Il vit un tas de pauvres gens, comme coquins, deschirez, affamez, contrefaits, fort mal en ordre et en très petit nombre; on luy dit que c'estoit ceux de Paradis, desquels il estoit ècrit: *Beati pauperes, quoniam ipsorum est regnum cælorum.* Ceux-ci estans retirez, on fit paroistre un nombre innombrable de personnages pleins de

ment to the great Italian. It was dedicated to Lord Cowper,[1] who in conjunction with the Grand Duke, Pietro Leopoldo, had given material assistance towards its completion. This English noble man was almost a citizen of Florence, where he proved a zealous patron of scholarship, and an ardent admirer of Machiavelli. In 1787, again in co-operation with the Grand Duke, he became an active and generous promoter of the plan started by Alberto Rimbotti for a public subscription towards the erection of a monument to Machiavelli in Santa Croce. Innocenzo Spinazzi, a sculptor of relative merit during that period of artistic decadence, was charged with the work, and Doctor Ferroni added to it the simple but eloquent description:

TANTO NOMINI NULLUM PAR ELOGIUM
NICOLAUS MACHIAVELLI,
Obit Anno A. P. V.[2] MDXXVII.

most precious manuscripts of the family library. Then in the Barberini Library in Rome a Codex was discovered, containing more of Machiavelli's inedited writings. Accordingly, in 1796 a second edition of the "Opere" was begun in eight volumes, intended to comprise many "Legazioni" and letters never before published. It was, however, incomplete, for it included neither the diplomatic nor private correspondence, and was compiled with so much haste that in the second book of the "Discorsi" there is a gap in the text from the middle of chap. xxx. to the end of chap. xxxiii. See the preface by Francesco Tassi to the edition of the "Opere," Italy, 1813 (Florence, 1826).

[1] George Nassau Clavering, third Earl Cowper, born in 1738, established himself in Florence in his youth, and in 1775 married Miss Anna Gore, daughter of a Lincolnshire gentleman, and a great favourite of the Grand Duke. With the exception of Sir Horace Mann, Lord Cowper was the most popular Englishman in Florence. In 1768 he was elected member of the Della Cruscan Academy. He returned the affection shown to him by the Florentines, and was a generous promoter of every design for the embellishment of the city. *Vide* Reumont, "Geschichte Toscana's" Gotha, "Perthes," 1876-7, vol. ii. pp. 360, 361.

[2] A *partu Virginis*, although, according to the Florentine style, the year began *ab incarnatione*.

family chapel.[1] In course of time this chapel was given up to a religious confraternity, that erected an altar in it and buried all their brethren there indiscriminately, without any one raising objections to the proceeding.[2] The family soon became extinct, for of all Machiavelli's sons Bernardo alone left any male issue, one of whom, Niccolò, became a canon, and the other, Alessandro, died in 1597,[3] leaving a female child aged nine, of the name of Ippolita, who married one of the Ricci family. The Machiavelli chapel then fell into still greater decay, so that its precise situation was no longer remembered. For reasons, elsewhere explained by us in detail, the name of Machiavelli was at last held in abhorrence by his own fellow-citizens. His fame, however, began to extend in the eighteenth century, as is evidenced by the numerous editions of his works, given almost simultaneously to the world.[4] In 1760, several of his unpublished compositions were printed at Lucca, and in 1767 the Preposto Ferdinando Fossi published a volume of his "Legazioni" never before edited. At last, in 1782, the large edition of his complete works in six quarto volumes was issued,[5] and, considering its date, was a worthy monu-

[1] In the "Libro dei Morti," from 1457 to 1501, No. 6, a. c. 288*t*. In the register of the year 1500 we find this entry: "Messer Bernardo Machiavelli, buried in Santa Croce on the said day (10th May, 1500)." And in the "Libro dei Becchini," No. 10, a. c. 128, under the date of the 22nd of June, 1527. "Niccolò di . . . Machiavelli, buried in Santa Croce on the 22nd" Both these books are in the Florence Archives. The same entry is given in the "Libro dei Morti," No 9.

[2] Ricci mentions this in his "Priorista" (Quartiere S. Spirito, 160). He says that the chapel was in the side of the "wall turned to the north, near the so-called door of the Guardi;" and tells how a monk of the Santa Croce church went to the Canon Niccolò, son of Bernardo di Niccolò Machiavelli, and informed him that many persons not connected with the family were now buried all together in the Machiavelli chapel, and that this seemed to him to be an unlawful abuse; and that it would be right to put a stop to it, and to restore the chapel. But the canon replied: "Oh, let them continue to do so, for my father was fond of society, and the more dead he has in his company, the better he will be pleased."

[3] In the "Priorista," Ricci, Quartiere S. Spirito, at c. 273*t*, it is noted that in 1581, Bernardo, son of Niccolò, son of Bernardo Machiavelli, "was more than seventy years of age, and indeed close upon eighty." The Canon Niccolò, son of this Bernardo, died of erysipelas on the 10th of June, 1597, and his brother Alessandro died in 1597, leaving a daughter of nine years named Ippolita. And thus the family became extinct. In the same year died Lorenzino, son of Lorenzo di Ristoro Machiavelli. With him another branch of the family came to an end. The third and last became extinct at the beginning of the eighteenth century.

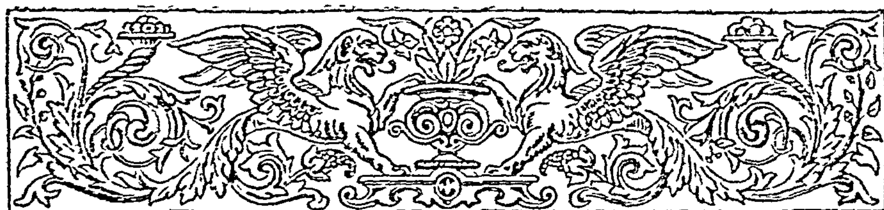
[4] The Hague, 1726; London (Paris), 1768; Venice, 1769; London, 1772

[5] This edition is preceded by a learned preface from the pen of Reginaldo Tanzini. The editors had not been allowed to avail themselves of the Strozzi library, containing many other of Machiavelli's autographs. Soon after, however, that branch of the Strozzi became extinct, and the Grand Duke purchased the

viduals. In many parts of Italy the population was far more cultured and gentle than beyond the Alps, and committed fewer crimes. Besides, although other nations had the greatest mistrust for Italian politicians, and carefully stood on their guard against them, they showed no want of confidence in our merchants or bankers; and many foreigners admitted Italian physicians, secretaries and preceptors into their households.

To this moral divergence between two sections of our society was added—at least among the upper classes—a contradictory conception of life itself. All private relations were ruled by Christian morality, or at all events professed unquestioning adherence to its precepts; but it was forsaken in public life, where it was supposed to have no practical value. Good faith, loyalty, and Christian goodness would have subjected to certain destruction any prince or government that should have actually obeyed their dictates in political matters. The state would have certainly fallen a prey to the enemy; would perhaps have dissolved into anarchy. This contradiction was patent to all; but no one dared to investigate its causes, or thought of overcoming it. The human conscience was, as it were, at war with itself, through being dragged in two opposite directions. And the one road led to Heaven, the other to Hell. So the human conscience was sometimes driven to decide "that it was better to love your country than your soul."

A similar state of things had serious consequences with regard to life and to literature. Scepticism invaded men's souls; the religious sentiment was weakened; it was attempted to study the world and realities as they actually were, apart from all else. A disproportionate admiration for the ancients arose, precisely because the ancients led men back to reality, to nature, and not only recognized the exigencies of statecraft, but exalted to heaven all who submitted to them for the safety and prosperity of their country. Literature, too, devoted itself to the study of nature, form and material beauty, and sought to become pagan in the midst of a Christian society. The ancient forms, however, became gradually inspired with a new spirit, and gave birth to the art of the Renaissance which was a purely Italian creation, and almost a first preliminary of peace between Paganism and Christianity, mind and nature, heaven and earth. But in practical life it was less easy to establish a similar reconciliation. No inconsiderable portion of literature itself, romance and comedy above all, reflects the internal chaos that was bewildering the Italian intellect. The national mind was going through a hard struggle in the midst of a political, social, and intellectual transformation. It was seeking the basis



CONCLUSION.



ACHIAVELLI, as we have seen, was very closely connected with his times. Therefore our estimate of him must greatly depend upon our estimate of the age in which he lived. He came into the world at a moment when political corruption was general throughout Europe, but more predominant in Italy than elsewhere on account of the greater number of persons taking part in public life. Hence the evil effects of this corruption infected every section of society in our country. Our culture enhanced the criminality of the vices and misdeeds of a statecraft no longer ruled by the blind and ungoverned passions of the Middle Ages, but the product of refined calculation and cunning, full of cruelty and devoid of scruples. With us, mediæval institutions rapidly fell into decay, leaving individual members of the community deprived of all guidance save that of their own instincts. In France, England, and Spain, feudalism still served as a basis for the sovereign power of those three great monarchies. But, possessed of more stable traditions, they were compelled to pursue a policy that, while no less corrupt as regarded its means, was necessarily more national in its aims.

Nevertheless, Italian corruption has assumed exaggerated proportions in the eyes of posterity. It has been forgotten that this corruption mainly prevailed among the upper classes of society, the statesmen and *literati* upon whom the attention of historians is almost exclusively fixed. Among the lower classes virtue and morality still remained more firmly rooted. This we find to be conclusively proved by the evidence of popular literature, familiar correspondence, and the lives of a vast number of obscure indi-

stinctive power of guiding and mastering men. In this gift he was surpassed by many of his contemporaries, and notably by Guicciardini. Nevertheless, Machiavelli found in public affairs a wide field for the exercise of his observant faculty, and for his feverish activity of mind, and was accordingly passionately devoted to them. On first assuming the Secretaryship of the Republic he was merely an excellent official servant. But his assiduity in his duties, his aptitude for planning and originating new designs, gained him the confidence of Soderini, who speedily began to employ him in matters of greater moment.

The circumstance that decided once for all the direction of his future studies, set him on the road for which he was naturally predestined, and formed the commencement of his true political training, was his mission to the court of the Duke of Valentinois. He then perceived how an adventurer of the worst type, and capable of the most iniquitous actions, might yet have grand qualities as a statesman and general. By a course of bloodshed and treason the duke actually succeeded in extirpating the most abominable tyrants of Romagna He founded a government that re-established order, tranquillity, and prompt administration of justice among the hardy inhabitants of that province, who once delivered from oppression, began to prosper, and conceived a lively affection for their new ruler. Had he been a kinder, or less corrupt man, had he shown any hesitation, his mercy, so Machiavelli thought, would have been cruel The figure of Cæsar Borgia rose before his eyes as the living personification of the moral contrast afflicting the age, and helped him to explain the enigma. He clearly saw that statecraft has ways and means of its own, which are not the ways and means of private morality; that, on the contrary, the morality of private life may sometimes check a statesman in mid-career and render him vacillating, without his being either a good or a bad man; and that it is mainly vacillation of this kind that leads to the downfall of States There must be no vacillation, he said, but a daring adoption of the measures demanded by the nature of events. Such measures will always be justified, when the end is obtained. And the end in view must be the welfare of the State. He who achieves this, even if a wicked man, may be condemned for his wickedness, but will deserve, as a prince, everlasting glory. If, on the contrary, he should cause the ruin of the State, whether through private ambition, or from hesitation born of a good motive, he will be consigned to infamy as a wicked or incapable prince, even when, as a private individual, deserving the highest praise. Such is the true meaning of Machiavelli's maxim: that the end justifies the means.

of a natural and rational scheme of morals, that, while respecting the historic necessities of life, should be in no contradiction with revealed morality; it craved independence of reason and conscience, without the destroyal of the sanctity of faith. And while Italy was writhing in this struggle, when already, through her own intrinsic strength, a new light was dawning in the horizon, all Europe fell upon her, stifled and then reviled her for leaving to others the completion of her own special work.

Without having extensive culture, Machiavelli early learnt to prize Pagan antiquity more highly than all else, and had a particular admiration for the Romans. His mind was formed by their history and their literature. Nature had gifted him with an extraordinarily limpid and acute intelligence; with an exquisite taste for elegance of form; with a most lively fancy, which although insufficient to make him a poet, influenced him continually; with a mordant and satiric spirit discerning the comic side of human events, and giving added force to the pungent wit of the sarcastic sallies that gained him so many enemies and detractors. For he had a kindly nature, and cannot be charged with a single bad action. His manners were certainly loose, but less so than might be imagined from the very licentious language which, according to the custom of the day, he adopted in his letters and his plays. Towards his wife and children he showed unvarying affection to the last hour of his existence. But Machiavelli's real life was all in his intellect: therein lay the true source of his greatness. His predominating mental gift, and that in which he outstripped all his contemporaries, was a singular power of piercing to the innermost kernel of historic and social facts. He was no patient investigator of minute historical details, nor had he the speculative genius required to dwell upon metaphysical and abstract considerations touching the nature of man. But he was unequalled in exploring and bringing to light the first origin and special result of any political revolution or social transformation. He was unequalled in discerning the qualities determining the nature of a people or a state. Nor could any one rival him in the power of indicating what was the character in any given society, not so much of this or that sovereign in particular, as of the sovereign, captain, aristocracy or people in general. It was in these things that all the mighty originality of his intelligence was shown.

And it was this predominant faculty that gave him so irresistible a vocation for a life devoted to public affairs. Not that it was a career leading him to wealth, since, despite his great aptitude for business, he was not possessed in any exceptional degree of that practical intuition of individual character conferring the in-

born in 1386, and nominated General Head of the Camaldolesi in 1431. An able and ambitious man, he was a great favourite with the Medici who, together with Niccoli, Marsuppini, Bruni, and not a few others, were frequent visitors to his cell. He had the faculty of preserving the friendships of even the touchiest of the set; he knew how to keep a discussion alive, but he had very little literary originality He made translations from the Greek; wrote a work entitled "Hodæporicon," containing various literary notices and descriptions of his travels; but his "Epistolæ" are his principal work, on account of his intimate relations with the scholars of his time, and form an important contribution to the history of that century. All this, however, is not enough to justify the great reputation that he then enjoyed, and that lasted after his death, for Mehus, in the preface and biographical sketch attached to his edition of the "Epistolæ," tried to concentrate round them the literary history of that century.

It would be an endless task to enumerate all the meeting-places of the learned; but we must not forget to mention the house of the Medici, where all and every one of them found welcome, patronage, and employment. There, too, were to be found all artists and foreigners of any merit. Almost all the richer Florentines of the fifteenth century were patrons and cultivators of letters. Roberto dei Rossi, the Greek scholar, passed a celibate life in his study, and gave lessons to Cosimo dei Medici, Luca degli Albizzi, Alessandro degli Alessandri, Domenico Buoninsegni. The Nestor of these aristocratic scholars was Palla Strozzi—he who aided Niccoli in his reform of the Florentine University—who paid out of his own pocket a large portion of the sum required to tempt Crisolora to come and teach Greek in Florence, and who spent much gold in obtaining ancient codices from Constantinople. When most iniquitously driven into exile, at the age of sixty-two, by Cosimo dei Medici, he found courage to bear up under this misfortune, and the subsequent loss of his wife and all his children, by studying the ancient writers at Padua up to the age of ninety-two years, when he went to his grave.[1]

And lastly, it is necessary to mention the University of Florence. In general, the Italian universities had been seats of mediæval and scholastic culture; learning had commenced outside, and not seldom in opposition to them But it was otherwise in Florence, the *Studio* almost rose and fell with the rise and fall of erudition. It did not come into existence until the December of 1321, dragged on languidly enough, now closed, now reopened, until 1397, when Crisolora, by his teachings in the Greek tongue, made Florence

[1] Vespasiano, "Vita di P. Strozzi."

He adhered to these ideas during the whole of his life, and they formed the basis upon which his political doctrines were built up. But the pressure of affairs left him no time to excogitate or transcribe them after his return to Florence. His missions to the French king and to the emperor gave him opportunities for investigating the general organization of France and Germany, and for writing admirable descriptions of all that he had noted. It was then, too, that he learned to recognize the immense advantages accruing to the national strength and general well-being by the formation of a great State. Besides this, the examination he was enabled to make of the military institutions of various countries, particularly of Switzerland and Germany; his experience of the siege of Pisa, and the historic examples of Greece and Rome, taught him distrust of mercenary troops and armies of adventure, and awoke in his mind the ideal conception of an armed and free people. This was the origin of his scheme of a Militia Ordinance, for which he made so many studies, and vainly expended so huge an amount of labour. But all these ideas gradually forming in his mind were still in a fragmentary state. It was impossible for him to give them any systematic arrangement, while obliged to travel continually, both within and without the territories of the Republic, and to write quantities of official letters which were often of very trifling importance. He occasionally composed a few verses, sketched a few comedies; but these pleasant labours were always interrupted, and only served as passing amusements. But he still pursued his observations, and continually added to them, especially when the Republic was struggling through the difficult crises and dangers occasionally threatening its existence. He served the government to the last with great fidelity and disinterestedness, and did all in his power to prevent its fall, which could not, however, be averted. After fourteen years of unremitting labour, after undertaking many diplomatic missions, after handling large sums of money for the organization of the militia and the expenses of the war, he was still as poor as at the outset of his career.

The fall of the Republic was a personal misfortune, inasmuch as it deprived him of office, drove him from public affairs, and plunged him in the greatest financial difficulties; nevertheless, it proved a blessing in disguise, since it forced him to think and to write, and won him immortality. Had he always preserved his secretaryship, we should have had nothing from his pen excepting the "Legazioni." But on being condemned to private life, his ideas began to assume shape and order; his mental horizon to widen. The Medici, being all-powerful in Rome and Florence

and explains the singular fascination it has exercised, all calumnies notwithstanding, upon the minds of thinkers and politicians. It was the scientific character of the work that led the author to examine with equal indifference both the virtuous and the wicked prince, and offer to either the counsels suited to the achievement of his end. These counsels are the outcome of earnest study of actual events, of ancient and modern history, without any reference to moral considerations. The *case of conscience*, so unavoidably present to our own minds, never seems to occur to that of Machiavelli, who is solely concerned in enquiring which is the road to power, and how the State is to be established? He never puts himself the question: whether the excessive immorality of the means employed, may not, even while momentarily grasping the desired end, sap the very foundations of society, and render in the long run all good and strong government an impossibility. He forgets to inquire whether, just as there is a private morality, there may not be also a social and political morality, imposing certain inviolable limits, and furnishing rules for the statesman's conduct, which, although varying with the times and different social conditions, are yet equally subject to righteous principles. This is the weak and fallacious side of his doctrine; that which disgusts us with its author, arouses our horror, and has been a perennial source of accusation and calumny.

But when, on completing his analysis, and cruel labour of vivisection, Machiavelli proceeds to draw his conclusions, then at last the practical side and real aim of his work are clearly seen. It is a question of achieving the unity of his Italian motherland and of delivering it from foreign rule. This was certainly the holiest of objects; but Machiavelli well knew that in the conditions in which Italy and Europe were then involved it would be impossible to achieve that object without recurring to the immoral means practised by the statesmen of the time. Pursued by this idea, and dominated by his theme, Machiavelli did not pause to disentangle the scientific, general and permanent aim of his book from the practical aim and transitory means, apparently and, it may be, really essential to its achievement at that moment. It is needful, he said in conclusion, to dare all things, and in view of the grandeur and sacredness of the end, to yield to no scruples. Solely by the formation of a united, powerful, and independent nation can Italy acquire liberty, virtue, and true morality. This is an enterprise only to be undertaken by a Prince-reformer, and by the means suggested and imposed by history and experience. The people must afterwards complete and consolidate it by liberty, by national arms, by public and private virtue.

It is this second idea that forms the special theme of the Discourses." They start from the same conception as that of the "Prince:" some one man must be the founder of the State, and go forward relentlessly to his end. They then proceed to show how the people should possess itself of the government, render it strong and prosperous, and administer it by means of free institutions and morality. And here, with an inexhaustible fund of just, profound, and practical observations, the author lays the basis of a new science of statesmanship. We must, however, confine ourselves to remarking that the whole literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries contains no other pages in any way comparable with those of the "Discourses" in praise of the love of liberty, patriotic devotion and the sacrifice of all private interest to the public good. For there, as in the exhortation at the close of the "Prince," Machiavelli's patriotism is vented with an eloquence bordering upon sublimity. At such moments his character gains elevation in our eyes, his figure assumes heroic proportions, and still more so when we remember that this patriotism not only inspired his intellect, but guided the conduct of his entire life.

To have freedom, the people must also have strength, and therefore Machiavelli was led to write his "Art of War." This work shows that, during the Pisan war, and throughout his various travels, he must have devoted much inquiry to the organization of foreign armies, for the sole purpose of discovering a means of regenerating the Italian arms, and was thus enabled to arrive at thoroughly original conclusions. For these studies not only led to the conception of his "Ordinanza," of the armed nation, but likewise caused him to recognize and proclaim that the genuine strength of armies, as of nations, consists in virtue. Without virtue, he concluded, a people can neither be strong nor free; can never accomplish anything great. The training of Italians to arms, to constant readiness to give their lives and their all for their country, can alone constitute the real beginning of their regeneration. And where, we may once more repeat, are other writings to be found extolling virtue with the heat or earnestness so nobly and eloquently poured forth in the "Art of War"?

Nor were these praises mere empty rhetoric. The best years of Machiavelli's life, his whole stock of energy and persistent, irrepressible activity, were dedicated to realizing the ideas expounded in this work. It is impossible not to grant him our admiration when we find him preaching the necessity of arming the people, training it to self-sacrifice for its country's cause, and ceaselessly endeavouring to impress Soderini and the Republic of

Florence with the same conviction. Nor was he content with this alone. We find him in his days of misfortune and persecution at the hands of the Medici, recommencing the same propaganda among the youthful band of the Oricellarii Gardens. Again later, when of advanced age and shaken health, we see him, forgetful of himself and his own private interests, endeavouring to convert even Clement VII. to his ideas. And his promptitude in offering to be the first initiator of the noble attempt, at the terrible time when the hosts of Charles V. were already advancing to overwhelm Italy in ruin, actually infused a momentary spark of enthusiasm into the Pope's uncertain soul. We are then forced to acknowledge that Machiavelli had at least one great and heroic passion redeeming, elevating and raising him above all his contemporaries: an ardent and irresistible love for liberty, his country, and even for virtue. And in remembering this, the brows of him who has been so persistently stigmatized as the incarnation of evil and moral darkness, become suddenly crowned with a divine splendour that glorifies the age.

This, then, was the process followed by Machiavelli's mind throughout his various works. Taken one by one, their unity fails to strike us, their aim is lost sight of, and they give occasion for the strangest misinterpretations and calumnies. Taken as a whole, we not only comprehend their value, but discern the path pursued by the national idea—then the idea of the age—personified in the great Florentine, in order to escape from the labyrinth of contradictions in which it was involved.

Italy had become incapable of a religious reformation similar to that accomplished in Germany. Instead of springing towards God, as Savonarola had predicted; instead of seeking strength in a new conception of faith, she aimed at a re-composition of the idea of the State and the motherland. She saw in the sacrifice of all to the universal good the only possible way of political and moral redemption. The unity of the regenerated country would have inevitably led to the re-establishment of morality, would have rekindled faith in public and private virtue, and discovered a method of sanctifying the purpose of life. This idea, vaguely and feebly felt by many, was the ruling thought of Machiavelli, the shrine upon which he offered up his entire existence. His dying eyes beheld the spectacle of Italy's ruin. Afterwards his great thought remained a dream, and he was therefore the least understood and most calumniated personality that history has known.

At the present day, when Italy's political redemption has begun, and the nation is constituted according to the prophecies of Machiavelli, the moment has at last come for justice to be done to him.



APPENDIX.

DOCUMENT I.

LETTERS OF THE NINE OF THE MILITIA.

1.

To the Vicar of Pescia, Berto da Filicaia.—2nd June, 1507.[1]

DON Giliberto spagnolo, nostro conestabole, ci scripse per una sua lectera, come el Papa da Fordigla da Uzano, havendo abbassato dopo certe parole uno spiede per darli, et lui defendendosi colla spada, et correndo ad quel romore uno suo garzone, feri decto Papa; donde noi ti commettemo, facessi d' averlo nelle mani Venne di poi hieri al magistrato nostro un fratello del Papa, et ci ha referito questo caso al contrario, et dice in sustanza che el Papa fu assaltato dal conestabole et dal suo garzone; et facendoci intendere come decto garzone era in Firenze, parendoci approposito, infino che noi intendessino bene la cosa, di haverlo nelle mani, lo facemo pigliare. Et desiderando hora intendere la verità del caso, ti scriviamo la presente, et voliamo che tu intenda quello che dice l' una parte et l' altra, et che tu esamini dipoi e' testimoni che n' allegano, et veggha con ogni debita diligentia d' intendere la verità di questo caso; et intesola, ci manderai per iscriptura tutto quello ne harai ritratto et quanto più presto potrai.

Manderaci le listre de' disubbidienti nell' ultimam ostra, et serberatene copia, et da decti disubbidienti trarrai la pena di 20 soldi per ciascuno; et così finira' di risquotere da quelli disubbidienti che ti lasciò l' antecessore tuo, et ci farai rimettere e' danari riscossi infino ad qui.

2.

To Agnolo da Ceterna.—31st July, 1507.[2]

Noi intendiamo quello che tu ci advisi per la tua de' 28; et circha alli

[1] "Florence Archives," cl. XIII dist. 2, n 159, f 82t. Machiavelli's Autograph.
[2] Ibid., cl. XIII. dist. 2, n. 159, f 118t Machiavelli's Autograph.

accordi che tu hai facti costà, per le questione che vi sono nate. Te ne commendiamo assai, et così seguirai per lo advenire; et quando non potessi comporre alcuna cosa, ce ne adviserai, perchè sopra ad ogni altra cosa desideriamo che cotesti nostri stieno uniti et in pace. Quanto ad Andrea del Bororo preso per condannagione dal podestà del Monte, scriviamo al podestà che lo rilaxi, perchè presupponiamo che tu dica el vero, che fussi condannato avanti che tu li dessi l' armi. Et però farai fede per via di testimoni á decto podestà, del dì che tu li desti le armi, et guarderai di dire la verità, acciò che non potessi accusarti di fraude, perchè l' ordine nostro lo fa securo delle condannagioni che li haveva dal dì che prese le armi indreto. Et quanto ad quello che tu desideri d' intendere come ti habbi ad governare, ti significhiamo che gli scripti non hanno altro privilegio, se non che sono securi dalle condannagioni vechie, et possono portare l' armi. In tucte l' altre cose eglino ànno ad essere tractati da'rectori et da ogni altro magistrato come se non fussino scripti.

Dispiaceci che sieno adoperati da' rectori ad fare le executioni; et però quanto adpartiene ad te, lo prohibirai loro per parte nostra, et noi anche ne advertiremo i rectori.

3.

To Giovencho de' Medici, potestà di Prato.—3rd November, 1507.[1]

Havendoci facto constare et bene certificato, Antonio di Zanobi del Papa, trombetto che fu di don Michele, havere impegnato una sua trombetta per dua ducati d' oro per li sua servitii, et parendoci ragionevole che si vaglia sopra la roba di decto don Michele, voliamo che del cavallo morello che è di don Michele, el quale detto trombetto ti ha facto staggire in mano, tu facci una delle dua cose, o che tu lo consegni a decto trombetto per stima, faccendoti pagare indreto quello più fussi stimato da due ducati in su, o veramente tu lo facci vendere allo incanto. Et del retracto ne darai dua ducati d' oro ad decto Antonio trombetto, et el restante serberai appresso di te per satisfare ad delli altri creditori di don Michele: et ad noi darai adviso di quello harai facto. *Vale.*

DOCUMENT II.

LETTER OF THE TEN TO GIOVAN BATTISTA BARTOLINI.
27th November, 1507.[2]

Havendo noi inteso hieri per la tua de' 24 et per una del commissario di Libbrafacta in conformità della tua, come el Volterrano fu taglato ad pezi in casa quelli della Chiostra, poi che fu condocto prigione in Pisa; ci dette assai dispiacere tale caso, sì perchè noi amavamo el Volterrano,

[1] "Florence Archives," cl. xiii. dist 2, n. 159, f 160 Machiavelli's Autograph.
[2] Ibid, cl. dist. 3, n. 121, f 88t. Machiavelli's Autograph.

sì perchè e' ci dispiacque el modo della morte sua, parendoci apto crudele et non conforme a' buoni tractamenti facti da noi alli prigioni che de' Pisani habbiamo et habbiamo hauto sempre in mano. Et perchè ogni huomo conosca che come noi non siamo per incrudelire quanto e' nostri nemici, così non siamo per lasciare impunite le crudeltà loro, facemo questa mattina impiccare alle finestre del palazzo del Capitano nostro, Giovanni Orlandi et Miniato del Seppia. Diamoti questo adviso ad ciò lo pubblichi, et che s' intenda in Pisa come e' loro cittadini non sono stati morti da noi, ma da la crudeltà che è stata usata contro a' nostri; et che l' intendino, poichè li usono male la nostra humanità, ch' e' si diventerà della natura loro.

DOCUMENT III.

LETTER OF THE GONFALONIER PIETRO SODERINI TO MACHIAVELLI.
FIRENZE, *27th June*, 1510.[1]

Niccolò carissimo, etc. Ci è parso farvi questi versi, per allargare più il [tem]po del signor Mar. Antonio,[2] il quale (come sapete) finì la condocta sua a dì xv di maggio; et essendo stato raffermo, non ha voluto acceptare, ma voleva crescere in condocta o in titolo: il che non è stato consentito, per non parere tempo adesso nè a l' una nè a l' altra cosa. Onde havendo lui forse qualche practica, existimando fare meglio e' facti suoi, dixe qua a noi, essersi acconcio con il Re de' Romani, ma che haveva tempo ad ratificare tucto il mese di giugno presente; et domandò qui uno mese di tempo ad levarsi, et così li furono conceduti li alloggiamenti gratis. Doppo il quale tempo si ritirò in quello di Luccha, in sulla campagna; et pare sia stato alloggiato in uno castagneto. Hora, da due giorni in qua, si è levato voce, per lettere di Roma, lui essere acconcio colla Chiesa, "et che debbi fare cinquecento fanti, et altri cinquecento se ne truova facti a Roma, sotto due connestaboli; et si dice si coniungeranno con lui. Ove si habbi ad andare et quello si habbi ad fare non s' intende dicerto. Alcuni dicono, per la guardia di Bologna; alcuni altri per andare contro al Duca o ad Vinegia in favore de' Vinitiani. Puossi ancora dubitare che queste cose non si faccino per li affari di Genova; perchè si dice quella terra essere molto sospesa et sublevata, dopo la morte di messer Gian Luigi."[3] Anchora è da considerare che "a Serazana si sono murati intorno a' fossi; dove si crede si sieno spesi quindici o 20 mila ducati; et vi è una forteza inexpugnabile. Et se detti fossi et fortificatione è fatta per ordine de Re, è da dubitare manco; ma se fussi facto per ordine de' Genovesi, è d' averne gran suspitione; perchè quello è uno ricetto inexpugnabile, et una porta da tenere il passo della Lombardia ad la Toscana, et havendo ad le spalle quali si vede che favoriscono tucte queste actioni et moti"

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta IV D III. [2] Marcantonio Colonna.
[3] The passages between quotation marks are deciphered by Machiavelli.

Ci è parso significarvelo, "perchè ne advertiate Monsignore Aubertet, al quale di queste cose di Serezana facemo parlare più mesi sono d' Alexandro. Et ci pare questa cosa sia neglecta et straccurata. Recordateghelo per parte nostra et come cosa importantissima: che se v' entrassi messer Ottaviano Fregoso, non ne lo caverebbono per frecta." Et vedete di porgere queste cose in maniera "che noi non ne riportiamo carico con altri," come spesso suole intervenire. Et quando "conoscessi che fussi per resultarne carico d' altri, o le tacete o le fate interdere come da voi. Non mancate di ricordarli che tenghino bené le mani in capo a' Svizeri, et che intractenghino lo 'mperadore." Circa alle altre parte harete lettere dal publico; et a noi non occorre dire altro. *Bene valete.*

Ex Palatio Florentino, die xxx iunii 1510, *raptim.*

PETRUS DE SODERINIS,

Vexillifer iustitiae perpetuus Populi Florentini.

Amico nostro carissimo [Nicolao] Machiavello man[datario] florentino apud Christianissimam [Maiesta]tem etc. [In cort]e del Re Christianissimo.

DOCUMENT IV.

AUTOGRAPH NOTES BY CHRISTINA OF SWEDEN, WRITTEN ON THE MARGINS OF A FRENCH TRANSLATION OF MACHIAVELLI'S "PRINCE" [1]

Il n'y a point d'entreprise plus dificile, plus douteuse, ni plus dangereuse, que celle de vouloir introduire de nouvelles Loix. Parce que l'Auteur	Cela est vrai
a pour ennemis tous ceux, qui se trouvant bien des anciennes, et pour tiédes défenseurs ceux même à qui les nouvelles tourneroient à profit. Et céte tiédeur vient en partie *de la peur* qu'ils ont de leurs adversaires, . . . en partie de	Que tout ceci est bien dit.
l'incredulité des hommes qui n'ont jamais bonne opinion des nouveaux établissemens, qu'aprés en avoir fait une longue expérience (Chap. VI.).	Il on quelque raison.
Il est besoin . . . de voir, si *ces Législateurs se soutiennent d'eux mêmes, où s'ils dépendent d'autrui, c'est-à-dire, si pour conduire leur entreprise, il faut qu'ils prient, et en ce cas ils échouent toujours: ou s'il peuvent se faire obéir par force, et pour lors ils ne manquent presque jamais de réussir.* De là	Ah que cela est bien dit.

[1] We have already spoken of this translation in our text, and the following are the most important annotations made by the Swedish Queen.

the centre of Hellenism in Italy. Later, the University again began to languish, but was renovated in 1414 by the efforts of Niccoli and of Strozzi, who, taking advantage of an ancient law, decreeing that none of the teachers should be Florentines, invited the most celebrated men in Greece and Italy; thus forwarding more than ever the union of Latin and Greek culture, and that of Florentine learning with Italian. In 1473, Lorenzo dei Medici transferred the Studio to Pisa; but Florence was allowed to retain a few chairs of literature and philosophy, which were always filled by celebrated men.[1] The great literary movement, that we have been employed in examining, produced no man of commanding talent after Petrarch and Boccaccio. All was confined to collecting, copying, correcting codices; materials were prepared for a fresh literary advance, which, however, had not yet begun. Italian composition had decayed, and Latin had as yet no original merits; we find grammarians, bibliophiles, and bibliographers in the place of real writers. But by slow degrees a new generation of learned men sprung up, showing a genuine, and, up to that date, unusual originality. This fact was the result of a natural process of things; writers who had at last thoroughly mastered the Latin tongue, began to express themselves with an ease and spontaneity which gave rise to new literary qualities, even to a new literature. Grammatical questions, when examined and discussed by men of the acute intellect and fine taste at that time possessed by Italians, were inevitably transformed into philosophical questions, thus laying the foundation of fresh progress in science.

But extraneous causes were also at work to hasten and provoke so notable a transformation, and foremost among these was the study of Greek. It was the means of bringing into contact, not merely two languages, but two different literatures, philosophies, civilizations. Thus the horizon was suddenly enlarged, and besides the greater originality of Greek thought and language, the mere fact of their great difference from Latin thought and language was of immense importance. The Italian mind found itself constrained to higher effort, to a longer and more difficult mental flight, requiring and developing greater intellectual energy. During the Middle Ages the Greek language had been very little known in Italy, and the knowledge of it possessed by the monks

[1] The decree was signed in 1472—Prezziner, "Storia del Pubblico Studio," &c.: Florence, 1812. in 2 vols. This work has not much historical value; but notices concerning the Studio are to be found scattered among the writings of the learned men, and one can also consult the work entitled—"Historia Academiæ Pisanæ," auctore Angelo Fabronio: Pisis, 1791-95, in 3 vols.

. . . *Or ces Princes sont ceux, à qui un Etat est donné*, ou pour de l'argent ou en *pure grace, tels qu'étoient ceux, que fit Darius pour sa sûreté, et pour sa gloire, en divers endroits de la Gréce et de l'Hellespont;* et ces Empereurs, qui de Particuliers parvenoient à l'Empire par la faveur des *soldats corro mpus.* Ceux-cy ne se *maintiennent que par la volonté et la fortune de ceux, qui les ont agrandis* (Chap. VII).

On peut pour la gloire donner les Estats mais on les donne guere pour sa seureté, et cest y pourvoir que de le donner.

Ils n'estoit pas touiour corrompus.

Cela n'est pas seur.

Si ce n'est pas un homme *de grand esprit, comment saura-t-il commander, aiant toujours vécu dans une fortune privée* (Ibid.).

Il est san doutte asse difficile.

Il en est des Etats, qui naissent tout à coup, *comme de toutes les autres choses, qui naissent* et qui croissent *subitament. Ils ne peuvent avoir de si fortes racines* . . . que la *premiére adversité* ne les ruine, si ceux qui sont devenus subitement Princes de la maniére que j'ai dit ne sont assés *habiles*, pour trouver d'abord les *moiens de conserver ce que la fortune leur aimis entre les mains* (Ibid.).

Tout cela est vrai.

Il vaut mieux dire asse heureux. On est touiour habile pourveu qu'on soit heureux.

Je veux raporter deux éxemples . . . L'un est de François Sforce, qui d'homme privé devint Duc de Milan *par sa grande habiléte, et conserva sans peine, ce qui lui en avoit tant couté à aquerir.* L'autre est de César Borgia, . . . qui aquit un Etat par *la fortune de son Pére*, et le *perdit aussi tôt que son Pére fut mort, quoqu'il eût fait tout ce qu'un homme habile et prudent devoit faire pour s'enraciner dans un Etat, qu'il tenoit de la fortune d'autrui.* Car celui, qui n'a pas jeté les fondemens, avant que d'être Prince, y peut *supléer par une grande adresse, aprés l'être devenu* (Ibid.).

Habilité et la fortune doivent éstre d'accort ou on ne fait rien qui vaille.

Cet exemple prouve ce qui a esté dit icy desus.

Sans la fortune on ne fait rien qui vallie

Il jugea[1] *si bien des intentions de la France, qu'il résolut de ne plus dépendre de la Fortune, ni des armes d'autrui* (Ibid.).

Ce l'unique parti que doit prendre tout homme qui a de l'esprit et du coeur.

Mais aprés qu'il eut rétabli ses afaires, *bien loin de se fier, ni à eux, ni aux autres étrangers, à la discrétion de qui il ne vouloit plus être, il mit tout son esprit à les tromper* (Ibid.).

Le parti qu'il prist estoit scelerat il y a des voyes plus nobles et plus seures pour venir à bout de se passer d'autrui.

[1] Cæsar Borgia.

vient, *que tous le Princes, que j'ai nommés, ont vaincu aiant les armées à la main*, et ont péri étant désarmés (Ibid.).

La force est l'unique segret de faire tout reusir.

S'est l'unique segret.

Il est aisé de leur persuader[1] *une chose, mais il est dificile de les entretenir dans céte persuasion. Il faut donc métre si bon ordre, que lors qu'ils ne croient plus, on leur puisse faire croire par force.* Moise, Cirus, Tesée et Romulus, n'eussent jamais pû faire observer longtems leurs Loix, *s'ils eussent été désarmés* (Ibid.).

On ne peut faire croire les gens par force, mais on peut les forcer d'en faire le semblent et c'est assé.

C'est là le gran miracle de la religion christienne.

Quiconque lira la Bible de sens rassis, dit Machiavel . . . verra que Moïse, pour rendre ses loix inviolables, *fut forcé de faire mourir une infinité d'hommes qui par envie s'oposaient à ses desseins* (Ibid, in note).

C'estoit un malheur.

Et occidat unusquisque fratrem et amicum et proximum suum (Ibid., in note).

Que terrible commandement.

Ces sortes de gens rencontrent d'abord de grans obstacles, et même de grans dangers sur leur route, et il leur faut un grand courage pour les surmonter. Mais aussi quand *ils l'ont fait, et qu'ils commencent d'être en vénération par la mort de leurs envieux, ils deviennent puissans, hureux et respectés* (Ibid.).

Tout cela est infalible.

Il faut savoir thrionfer de l'envie sen faire mourir les envieux. Ce seroit leur faire trop d'honeur.

A ces grans éxemples, j'en veux ajouter un moindre. . . . C'est celui d'Hiéron, qui de particulier devint Prince de Siracuse, *sans en devoir autre chose à la Fortune que l'occasion* (Ibid.).

Cet lui devoir beaucoup

Les Ecrivains, qui ont parlé de lui,[2] disent, *que, dans sa fortune privée, il ne lui manquoit rien pour regner qu'un Roiaume* (Ibid.).

Cet un gran et beau defaux.

Il quita ses anciens amis, e ten fit de nouveaux, et aprés qu'il se fut fait des amis et des soldats entiérement dévoués à lui, il lui fut aisé de batir sur ces fondemens. Si bien *qu'il eut beaucoup de peine à aquérir, mais peu à conserver* (Ibid.).

Ce de quoi ie ne le louerai pas

Il est bien fait de faire des nouveaux amis sen faire tort aux anciens

C'est la dificulté.

Comme ceux qui de Particuliers deviennent Princes seulement par bonheur, ont peu de peine à le devenir, ils en ont beaucoup à se maintenir.

[1] The people

[2] Ierone

qui doivent lui nuire, introduire de nouveaux usages, être grave et sevére, magnanime et libéral, détruire une milice infidéle et en faire une à sa mode, entretenir l'amitié et l'estime des Princes, . . . celui là, dis-je, ne sauroit trouver des éxemples plus récens que les actions du Valentinois. Tout ce qu'on lui peut reprocher est les mauvais choix *qu'il fit en la personne de Jules II.* Car s'il ne pouvoit pas faire un Pape, à sa mode, il étoit *maitre de l'exclusion de tous ceux qu'il ne vouloit point.* Or il ne devoit jamais *consentir à l'éxaltation des Cardinaux, qu'il avoit ofensés, ou qui, devenant Papes, avoient lieu de le craindre* (Ibid.).

Les mechants jouis se rarement de leur mechancete

Tout cela se fait mieux par la vertu que par le crime.

Machiavelli se trompe.

C'est sur tout dans l'election des Papes que Dieu se moque de la prudence humaine.

Tant se trompent ceux, qui croient que les bienfaits nouveaux font oublier aux Grans les anciennes ofenses (Ibid.).

Maxime veritable.

Les bienfaits ne *pénétrent jamais si avant que les injures*, parce que *la reconnoissance se fait à nos dépens, et la vangeance aux dépens des ceux que nous haissons. Tanto proclivius est injuriae quam beneficio vicem exsolvere, quia gratia oneri, ultio in quaestu habetur* (Ibid.).

Conter sur la reconoissance des hommes cest conter sur un fon perdu.

Sentiment de ames basses.

Agatoclès, sicilien . . *fut scélérat dans tous les divers Etats de sa fortune, mais toujours homme de coeur et d'esprit* (Chap VIII).

On est rarement scelerat avec de l'esprit et du coeur.

Véritablement, on ne peut pas dire, que ce soit vertu de tuer ses Citoiens, de trahir ses Amis, d'être sans foi, sans Religion, sans humanité; moiens qui peuvent bien faire aquérir un Empire, mais non une vraie gloire. Mais si je considére *l'intrépidité d'Agatoclés dans les dangers, et sa constance invincible dans les adversités, je ne vois pas, qu'il doive être estimé inférieur à pas un de plus grans Capitaines, quoique d'ailleurs il ne mérite pas de tenir rang parmi les grans hommes, vû ses cruautés horribles et mille autres crimes.* On ne peut pas donc *attribuer à la fortune, ni à la vertu des choses, qu'il a faites sans l'une et sans l'autre* (Ibid.).

Cela est bien dit et tres veritable.

Tout est très bien dit.

Au contraire tout ces crimes n'enpecherent pas quil n'eust et de vertu et de la fortune. On ne fait rien sen eux.

Il fit un féstin solennel[1] où il invita Fogliani et tous les premiers de la Ville, puis à la fin du repas, . . . il ouvrit à dessin un entretien sérieux. . . . Et

[1] Oliverotto da Fermo.

Nec unquam satis fida potentia ubi nimia est, dit Tacite (Ibid., note).

Nunquam fida nisi nimia.

Il s'avisa, un matin,[1] *de faire pourfendre Remiro*, et de faire *exposer sur la place de Cesene les piéces de son corps*, . . . pour montrer au peuple que les cruautés commises ne venoient point de lui, *mais du naturel violent de son Ministre. Ce qui en éfet surprit, et contenta tout ensemble les Esprits* (Ibid.).

Action indigne.

Meschante maxime, de contenter le peuple par le sacrifice des ministres.

C'est l'ordinaire des Princes de sacrifier tôt ou tard les instruments de leur cruauté (Ibid., note).

Mechante maxime.

Comme il avoit à craindre, qu'un nouveau Pape ne voulût lui ôter ce qu'Alexandre lui avoit donné, il tâcha d'y obvier par *quatre* moiens 1 *en exterminant toute la race des Seigneurs*, . . . 4 *en se rendant si grand Seigneur avant que le Pape mourût, qu'il pût de lui même résister à un premier assaut* (Ibid.).

Le dernier estoit le plus seur.

Il y a du danger à laisser la vie à ceux que l'on a dépouillés. *Periculum ex misericordia* . . . (Ibid., note).

Cette ydre ne s'esteint iamais.

Comme il fût arivé sans doute l'année même qu' Alexandre mourut, il devenoit si puissant et si acrédité, qu'il eût pû se soutenir lui même, sans dépendre nullement d'autrui (Ibid.)

C'est l'unique segret quant il ne suffit pas rien ne suffit.

Or il étoit si brave et si habile à connoitre, quand il faloit gagner ou ruiner les hommes: et les fondemens qu'il avoit jetés en si peu des tems étoient si bons, que, s'il eût eté en santé ou qu'il n'eût pas eu deux puissantes armées à dos il eût surmontes toutes les dificultés (Ibid.)

Grandes qualites.

Je n'en doute pas.

Bien que les Baglioni, les Vitelli et les Ursins fussent venus *à* Rome, *ils n'y purent rien faire contre lui, tout moribond qu'il étoit. Et s'il ne pût pas faire élire le Pape celui qu'il vouloit, du moins il fit exclure ceux qu'il ne vouloit pas* (Ibid.).

C'estoit bien assé pour un moribond.

Tout cela bien considéré, *je ne sai que reprendre dans le conduite du Duc* (Ibid.).

Sa mechanceté et sa cruauté, tout le reste estoit admirable.

Aiant un grand courage et de grans desseins, il ne se pouvoit pas gouverner autrement. Car ses projets n'ont échoué *que par sa maladie et par la brieveté du Pontificat d'Aléxandre.* C'est pourquoi, le nouveau Prince, qui veut s'assurer de ses ennemis, se faire des amis, *vaincre par la force ou par la ruse, être aimé et craint des peuples, respecté et obéi des soldats se défaire de ceux qui peuvent ou*

Il ny a poin de grandeur ny de fortune qui merite d'estre acheté aux prix des crimes, et on n'est jamais ny grands ny heureux a ce prix.

[1] Cæsar Borgia.

Lors que c'est un Prince, qui sait commander, et qui ne manque point de coeur dans l'adversité, ni de ce qu'il faut pour entretenir l'esprit du peuple, il ne se trouvera jamais mal d'avoir fait fond sur son afection. D'ordinaire, les *Principautés civiles périclitent*, quand il s'agit d'*établir une Domination absolue.* Car ses Princes commandent *par eux-mêmes, ou par des Magistrats.* Si c'est par autrui, *le danger est plus grand*, dautant qu'ils dépendent de la volonté des Citoiens (Ibid.).

Grandes paroles et un beau raisonnement.

Cela est sujet à condition, et n'est iamais vrai si non quant on est le plus fort et que l'on veillie l'estre

Il raison asse bien.

Et alors le Prince n'est plus à tems de se rendre Maitre absolu, *parcequ'il ne sait à qui se fier* (Ibid.).

Il faut ne se fier a soi mesme.

Alors *un chacun court, un chacun promet, un chacun veut mourir pour lui, parce que la mort est eloignée* (Ibid.).

Belle parole.

L'expérience est d'autant-plus dangereuse, qu'on ne la peut faire qu'une fois. Ainsi, un Prince sage doit faire en sorte, *que ses sujets aient besoin de lui en tout tems moiennant quoi ils lui seront toujours fidéles* (Ibid.).

Bonne maxime.

En ce monde on ne peut se passer les uns des autres. Il faut rarement se fie a personne, mais il faut souvent faire semblent de s'y fier.

Il est bon d'éxaminer la qualité du Prince, c'est à dire, s'il a un si grand état, *qu'il puisse de lui même se soutenir dans le besoin, ou bien, s'il ne sauroit se passer de l'assistence d'autrui* (Chap. X.).

Malheur a ceux qui on besoin d'autrui.

Ceux-là peuvent se soutenir d'eux mêmes, qui ont assés d'hommes, ou d'argent, pour métre une bonne armée sus pié, et donner bataille à qui que ce soit qui les vienne assaillir: Au contraire ceux-là ont toujours besoin d'autrui, qui sont *contraints de se tenir enfermés dans leurs Villes, faute de pouvoir paroitre en campagne* (Ibid.).

Il n'y a pas d'austre segret que celui là.

Quan cela on est perdu.

Le villes d'Alemagne . . . *n'obéissent qu'à leur mode à l'Empereur, qu'elles ne craignent point, ni pas-un autre voisin puissant* (Ibid.).

Cela est fort changé.

Comme elles ont toutes de fortes murailles, de grans fossés, . . . *un chacun voit, que les sieges de ces Villes seroit long et pénible* (Ibid.).

Elle sont venales.

Les choses du Monde sont si sujétes au changement, qu'il est presque impossible de tenir, un an durant, le siége devant une Place (Ibid.).

Quelle place durera tant si elle est attaqué comme il faut sen estre secourue.

C'est la coutume des hommes d'aimer autant pour le bien qu'ils font, que pour celui qu'ils reçoivent (Ibid.).

Il n'a pas tort.

quand il vit son Oncle, et les autres conviés, entrer en raisonnement, il se leva en sursaut . . . et entra, avec eux, dans une chambre, où étoient cachés des soldats, qui les égorgérent tous (Ibid.)

Mechante et indigne action.

Il eût eté aussi dificile de le détroner,[1] qu'Agatoclés, si au bout d'un an il ne se fût pas laissé tromper par le Valentinois, qui le prit avec les Ursins à Sinigaille, où il fut étranglé . . . (Ibid.).

Quel horrer.

Dieu punit le mechant par le mechant.

Je crois, que cela vient du bon, ou mauvais usage, que l'on fait de la cruauté. On la peut apeller bien emploiée, *s'il est jamais permis de dire, qu'un mal est un bien, quand elle ne se fait qu'une fois, et encore par nécessité de se métre en sûreté: et qu'elle tourne enfin au bien des sujets. Elle est mal exercée, quand on l'augmente dans la suite du tems, au lieu de la faire entiérement cesser* (Ibid.).

Cela n'est pas mal dit.

Il y a sen doutte des maux qui ne se gerisse que par le sang et par le feu: en la politique comme dans la chirugie les pitoiables chirugin ne guerisse pas les playes il tu ent les malades

L'usurpateur d'un Etat doit faire toutes ses cruautés à la fois, pour n'avoir pas à les recommencer tous les jours et *pouvoir s'assurer et gagner les esprits par des bienfaits.* Le Prince, qui fait autrement, *par timidité, ou par mauvais conseil, est force de tenir toujours le couteau en main* (Ibid.).

Tout ce qui se fait par timidité est mal fait.

Ainsi, *le mal se doit faire tout à la fois,* afin que ceux à *qui l'on le fait, n'aient pas le temps de le savourer.* Au contraire, *les bienfaits se doivent faire peu à peu, afin qu'on les savoure mieux. Enfin, le Prince doit vivre de telle sort avec ses Sujets, que nul accident, bon ou mauvais, ne le puisse faire varier.* Car quand *la nécessité te presse, tu n'est plus à tems de te venger, et le bien que tu fais, ne te sert de rien, parceque l'on ne t'en sait point de gré, persuadé que l'on est que tu y es forcé* (Ibid.).

Il se trompe.

Il faut se faire craindre et aimer cet le seul segret.

Punir et recompenser bien mais punir avec regret et recompenser avec ioye.

On peut se venger touiour.

Un Prince a besoin de l'amitié du peuple, faute de quoi il n'a point de ressource dans l'adversité (Ibid.).

Et que l'on ne m'objecte point le commun proverbe, qui dit, que *de faire fond sur le peuple, c'est bâtir sur la boue* (Ibid.).

Bien dit.

L'afection du peuple, se perd aussi aisément qu'elle se gagne (Ibid., note).

Sentence d'or.

[1] Oliverotto

l'argent et des armes. Témoin tout ce que j'ai dit *qu'il fit par le moien du Duc de Valentinois, et de François*, etc. (Ibid.).

un Pape qui du savoir faire avec de l'argent et des armes.

Il fist san doutte des grandes choses avec des instruments et moiens detestables.

Jules, successeur d'Alexandre, trouvant . . . un chemin ouvert aux moiens de tesauriser (*de quoi nul Pape ne s'étoit encore avisé avant Aléxandre*) . . . non seulement il suivit ces traces, *mais enchérissent même per dessus, il se mit en tête d'aquérir Bologne, des ruiner le Vénitiens, et de chasser les François de l'Italie. Ce qui lui réussit avec d'autant plus de gloire, qu'il fit tout cela, pour agrandir l'Eglise, et non pour avancer les siens. Il laissa les Ursins et les Colonnes au même état qu'il les trouva*, et bien qu'il y eût quelque *sujet d'altération entre eux*, néanmoins deux choses *les retinret dans le devoir, l'une la grandeur de l'Eglise qui les abaissoit, l'autre de n'avoir point de Cardinaux de leur Maison* (Ibid.).

Je n'en croi rien.

Brave Pape.

Cet la le vray devoir des Papes.

C'est le segret.

Ainsi, *Léon X. a trouvé le Pontificat à un tres-haut degré de puissance :* et il y a lieu d'espérer, *que comme Aléxandre et Jules l'ont agrandi par les armes*, il le rendra *encore plus grand, et plus vénérable par sa bonté, et par mille autres bonnes qualités, dont il est doue* (Ibid.).

C'est les segrets

DOCUMENT V.

TWO LETTERS OF LODOVICO MACHIAVELLI TO NICCOLÒ HIS FATHER.

I.

Adrianopoli, 14th August, 1525.[1]

† Ihs, addi xiiij d'agosto 1525.

Honorando padre etc. Al passato vi s' è ischrito abastantia. E questa per dirvi chome di un chonto che io ò chon Charlo Machiavegli, non l'à mai voluto saldare ; perchè io penso andare a fare e'fatti mia. E per l' altra mia vi schrissi chome m' era restato di tutta la somma panni sette 1/2 , e' quali panni, per essere un pocho ischarsi, gli arei finiti meglio qui che in Peia. E per esermi Charlo Machiavegli poco amicho, insieme

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta v. n 46.

Agricola *renouvelloit tous les ans les garnisons et les munitions des Places, afin qu'elles pussent soutenir un long siége* (Ibid., note).

Il y a du pour et du contre.

Il ne me reste plus à parler, que des Principautés Eclésiastiques, *qui sont dificiles à aquerir, mais faciles à conserver, parcequ'elles sont apuiées sur de vieilles coutumes des Religion, qui sont toutes si puissantes, que de quelque maniére qu'on se gouverne, l'on s'y maintient toujours. Il n'y a que ces Princes, qui ont un Etat, et qui ne le défendent point; qui ont des sujets, et qui ne les gouvernent point. Il n'y a qu'eux, qui ne sont point depoüillés de leurs Etats, quoiqu'ils les laissent sans défense, et qui ont des sujets, qui n'ont ni la pensée, ni le pouvoir de s'aliéner d'eux.* Ce sont donc là les *seules Principautés assurées et hureuses.* Mais comme elles *sont régies et soutenües par des causes supérieures, où l'esprit humain ne sauroit ateindre ce seroit présomption et témérité à moi d'en discourir.* Néammoins, si quelqu'un me demande, d'où vient que l'Eglise est devenüe si puissante dans le Temporel, *qu'un Roi de France en tremble aujourdhui, et qu'elle l'a pu chasser de l'Italie, et ruiner les Venitiens:* au lieu *qu'avant le Pontificat d'Aléxandre*, non seulement le Pontentats d'Italie, mais même les moindres Barons et Seigneurs Italiens *la craignoient peu à l'egard du Temporel;* il ne me paroit pas inutile de le remémorer. . . . Avant que Charles, Roi de France, passât en Italie, céte Province étoit *sous l'Empire du Pape, des Venitiens, du Roi de Naples, du Duc de Milan et des Florentins.* Ces Potentats avoient deux principaux soucis, *l'un d'empêcher, que les armes Etrangères n'entrassent en Italie,* l'autre, que pas-un d'eux *ne s'agrandît davantage* (Chap. XI.).

Plus tan.

Tout les prince d'aujourd'hui son ecclesiastiques a ce propos.

Toutte l'Italie est dans cet estat et un grande partie de l'Europe.

Peut on estre plus malheureux que le son le peuples de l'Estat ecclésiastique sous Inn. XI.

Il a raison.

Ce temps est passé.

On le feroit encore il suffiroit de vouloir.

Alexandre VI. estoit un gran Pape quoy que l'on dise

A presen on ne craint plus ni le temporel ny le spituel.

Trop de maistres.

Ces soins estoit bien fondé.

Cela ne se pouvit à la longe.

Pour humilier le Pape, l'on se servoit des Barons Romains, qui étant partagés en deux factions, les Ursins et les Colonnes, avoient toujours les *armes à la main, pour vanger leurs queréles, jusque sous les yeux du Pape* (Ibid.).

A present on ne se sert que de lui mesme.

Si Machiavel estoit vivant que diroit il a present.

Une dixaine d'années, que vivoit un Pape, sufisoit à peine, pour abaisser l'une des factions. . . . Cela faisoit que les *forces temporelles du Pape étoient méprisées en Italie.* Il vint enfin un *Alexandre VI., qui montra mieux, que tous ses Prédécesseurs ce qu'un Pape est capable de faire avec de*

Il raisonne bien.

On peut doutter s'il ont jamais ésté plus mépisés qu'a present.

Que ne peut faire

2.

Ancona, 22nd of May, 1527.[1]

† Xhs, addi xxij di mago 1527.

Honorando padre ec. L' ultima mia fu di Peia. Dipoi, non vi s' è schritto per non essere ochorso Al presente, per dirvi, chome dua goini fa arrivai qui inn'Anchona, e ieri ebi una gran febre. Siamo qui stallati e achonfinati rispetto al morbo. Voirei subito, per questo fante ch' à eseie di ritorno, mi dicessi s' e' mia chavagli sono venduti e se à chonperatori per le mani : perchè qua mi truovo 7 chavagli. E avendo chonperatori del chavallo grande, vi richordo mi chosta ducati 110, e per mancho non lo date. E subito date per detto fante aviso, che non badeià niente chostì: e noi di qua non partiremo se detto fante non torna. Non sarò più lungo per non aveie tenpo, e anche non mi sentire tropo bene, chè siamo passati da Rauga in trenta ore, dove chadevano di peste li uomini moiti per la strada. E per questo rispetto ò gran paura. Che Idio m' aiuti A voi senpre mi rachomando. Idio di male senpie vi guardi. Rachomandatemi a mona Marietta, e dite che pregi Idio per me ; e salutate tutta la brigata.

Vostro LODOVICO MACHIAVEGLI
fuora d'Anchona.

Al molto suo honorato padre
Nicholò Machiavegli, in
Firenze.

DOCUMENT VI.

LETTER OF MARIETTA MACHIAVELLI TO HER HUSBAND NICCOLÒ.
Firenze, Date uncertain.[2]

† a nome di dio a di[3] 24.

Carisimo Nicholo mio. Voi mi dilegate, ma non n' avete ragone, chè più rigollo arei se voi fusi qui. Voi che sapete bene chome io sto lieta quando voi no siete quagù ; e tato più ora che m' è stato deto chostasù è si gra' morbo ; pesate chome io sto choteta, che e' non trovo riposo nè di nè note : questo è la letiza ch' i' ò de biabino. Però vi prego mi madiate letere u poco più speso che voi no fate, chè non ò aute se non tre. Non vi maraviglate se io non v' ò scricto, perchè e' non potouto, ch' ò auto la febre in sino a ora : no sono adirata. Per ora e babino sta bene, somigla voi, è biaco chome la neve, ma gl' à e capo che pare i veluto nero, ed è peloso chome voi, e da che somiglia voi, parmi bello ; ed è visto che pare che sia stato un ano al mondo ; e apeise li ochi che

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta v n. 22.
[2] Laurentian Library, Cod Tempi, n 57, a.c 165 Autograph.
[3] There is an erasure between *di* and 24

chon uno Giovanbatista Nasini e co Nicolaio Lachi andavano a botea di quegli che e' sapevano che gli volevano, e dicevangli che io non n' avevo se none panni di rifiuto. E se Charlo si fusi portato chome s' avea a portare uno uomo da bene, io gli arei ogi finiti, dove io sono istato forzato a mandargli in Pera a Giovani Vernacci. Anchoia non gli bastò farmi quella inguria, che e'me ne fece una altra. Perchè io volevo partire quindici giorni fa, e andare in chompagnia delle robe; e volevo, innanzi che io mi partissi, saldare detto chonto chon esso secho; e che e' mi dessi infino a ducati cento ventitrè che io ò avere da lui, per fare e' chasi mia; e mai c' è stato ordine che lui l' abi voluto saldare. E chosi restai indrieto, e qui istaiò per infino a che partirà giente per in Pera; e ogni giorno che io ci starò, gli domanderò se e' vole saldare chon esso mecho. Se none, chome io sarò in Pera, io vi do la fede mi', che la prima faccienda che io farò sarà questa, che io me n' andrò al Balio, e bisogneià, se chrepassi, che e' venga lassù, o che egli ordini che io sia pagato. E farogli quelo onore che e' merita. Per avviso.

A Roma o a Firenze che voi siate, priegovi che all' auta di questa mi schriviate quelo che è seguito de' chasi vostri; che mi pare un gran miracholo, che da diciannove di magio in qua nonn' abi mai auto nuove de' chasi vostri, o da nessuno di chasa; chè pure c' è venuto di moltissime lettere di chostà. Per aviso.

Anchora vi priego che se di quel tristo di quel prete, se voi nonn' avete fatto nulla, che alla auta di questa voi vegiate che in qualche parte io sia vendichato di tante ingurie quante e' m' à fate. E se e' vi ramenta bene voi mi schrivesti che io atendessi a fare bene in Levante, e voi atenderesti a stare bene a Roma, e quando questo vi riescha, che le ingiurie si potrebono vendichare. E io vi dicho che di tanta roba quanta io aveva che non era possibile fare meglio. Non so già come voi v' avrete fato voi, che istimo a chomparatione di me, che voi l' abiate fatta molto meglio. Sì che pensate se io ò animo di vendicharmi. Ma sa' mi male che le vendette che noi potremo fare chon quattro parole, e mostrare chome egli è un tristo, e per questa via chavallo di quella chiesa, vogliamo serbarci a farle chon nostro danno, e chavare dua occhi a noi per chavarne uno al chompagnio E in voi istà ogni chosa. E mendesimamente in sulle vostra parole, sapete che io m' ebi a ingozare quella di Cecho de' Bardi. Ma più non voglio ragionar di questo; ma bastivi che se io nonn' ò altre nuove, io sarò prima a Sant' Andrea che a Firenze, e gastigerò questo tristo. Più non ne ragionerò, chè tanto l' ò schritto, che mi dovete avere inteso. E farò più presto che voi non chredete, perchè sarò chostì innanzi che passi mezo gennaio, se Idio mi presta sanità. Non altro per questa. Rachomandatemi a mona Marietta; e ditegli che per non n' avere tempo non gli ò ischritto: el simile a Bernardo. Salutate quelli fanciugli per mia parte, e del chontinovo a voi mi rachomando. Iddio di male vi guardi.

Vostro LODOVICO MACHIAVEGLI
in Adrianopoli.

Honorando padre Nicholò Machiavegli, in Firenze.

of St Basilio, in Calabria, was much exaggerated by report. Two Calabrians, Barlaam and Leonzio Pilato, had picked up the language at Constantinople; and the former of these taught its rudiments to Petrarch, who, notwithstanding his ardent desire to learn it, could never understand the Homer that he kept spread open before him[1] The second was Professor in Florence for three years, thanks to Boccaccio, who thus brought about the foundation of the first Greek chair in Italy. But from 1363 to 1396 this instruction, in itself poor enough, failed entirely. Italians desiring to obtain it were compelled, like Guarino and Filelfo, to seek it at Constantinople And the first Greek refugees who came among us were of far less use than is commonly supposed; for being ignorant of Italian, having only a smattering of Latin, and not being men of letters, they were quite incapable of satisfying a passion to which, however, their very presence was a lively stimulus It was the election of Emanuele Crisolora to a professorship in the Studio, in 1396, that really marked the beginning of a new era of Hellenism in Italy. Previously a teacher at Constantinople, he was a true man of letters, he was capable of teaching scientifically, and he numbered among his pupils the first *literati* of Florence Roberto dei Rossi, Palla Strozzi, Poggio Bracciolini, Giannozzo Manetti, and Carlo Marsuppini immediately came to attend his lessons Leonardo Bruni, then engaged in legal studies, no sooner heard that it was at last possible to learn Homer's tongue, and drink of the first fountain of knowledge, than he forsook everything in order to become one of the best Hellenists and *literati* of his time[2] From that moment, he who was ignorant of Greek was esteemed but half educated in Florence, for that study made rapid strides, and it was likewise greatly aided by the arrival of other refugees, generally of higher cultivation, and who found a better prepared soil[3] Another important aid was the Florentine Council of 1439, which, intended to reunite the Greek and Latin Churches, served instead to unite the literary spirit of Rome and Greece The Pope had need of Italian interpreters to understand the representatives of Greece, and both parties, equally indifferent to religious questions, at the first meeting leapt from theology to philosophy, which was usually among the Greeks more widely cultivated than letters. Giorgio Gemisto Pletone, the most

[1] Petrarca, "Lettere Senili," bk iii lett 6; bk v. lett. 1; bk vi lett. 1, 2

[2] Leon Bruni, "Rerum suo tempore in Italia gestarum, Commentarius," apud Murat Script, Tom. xix. p 920.

[3] Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Italiana"; Gibbon. "Decline and Fall," &c ; Voigt, "Die Wiederbelebung," &c.

non era nato, e mese a romore tuta la casa. Na la babina si sete male. Ricordovi e tornare. Non altro Idio sia co voi, e guardivi.

Nadovi farseto e dua camice e dua fazoleti e uno scugtoio, chè vi à qui queste cose.

Vostra MARIETA
in fireze.

Spettabili viro Nicholo di mess. Bernardo Machiavelli, in Roma.

DOCUMENT VII.

FIVE LETTERS OF NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI TO HIS NEPHEW GIOVANNI VERNACCI AT PERA.[1]

I.

Firenze, 4th of August, 1513.

Carissimo Giovanni. Io ti scrissi circa un mese fa, et dixiti quanto mi occorreva, et in particulari la cagione perchè non ti havevo scripto per lo addreto. Credo la harai hauta, però non la replicherò altrimenti.

Ho dipoi hauta una littera tua de' dì 26 di maggio, alla quale non mi occorre che dirti altro, se non che noi siamo tuti sani: et la Marietta fecie una bambina, la quale si morì in capo di 3 dì. Et la Marietta sta bene.

Io [ti] scripsi per altra come Lorenzo Machiavegli non si teneva satisfacto di te, et in particulare delli advisi, perchè diceva lo havevi advisato di rado et suspeso, da non cavare delle tue lettere nessuna cosa certa. Confortoti per tanto ad scrivere ad quelli con chi tu hai ad fare, in modo chiaro, che quando eglino hanno una tua lettera, e' paia loro essere costì, in modo scriva loro particularmente le cose Et quanto al mandarti altro, mi ha detto che, se non sbriga cotesta facciенda in tucto et se ne reduce al netto, che non vuole intraprendere altro.

Egli è venuto costà uno Neri del Benino, cognato di Giovanni Machiavegli, al quale Giovanni ha dato panni; et però non ci è ordine che facessi con altri. Et Filippo li vuole vendere in su la mostra.

Attendi ad stare sano, et bada alle facciende, chè so che se tu starai sano et farai tuo debito, che non ti è per mancare cosa alcuna. Io sto bene del corpo, ma di tucte l' altre cose male. Et non mi resta altra speranza che Idio che mi aiuti, et in fino ad qui non mi ha adbandonato ad facto.

Raccomandami alla memoria del consolo Iuliano Lapi mille volte, et digli che io sono vivo. Et non mi resta altro. Christi ti guardi.

Addi 4 di agosto 1513.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVEGLI, *in Firenze.*

Domino Giovanni di Francesco Vernacci, in Levante.

Royal Library at Parma. Autograph.

2.

Firenze, 20th of April, 1514.[1]

Carissimo Giovanni. Io ho dua tue lettere in questo ultimo, per le quali mi commecti vegga di ritrarre quelli danari della monaca dal Monte, ad che, come prima si potrà attenderò, perchè se non passa l' ottava di Pasqua, non posso attendere, per non si potere andare a munisteri. Attenderovvi poi, et del seguito te ne darò notitia.

Io vedrò con Lorenzo et con altri, se io ti potrò indirizzare faccienda alcuna, et potendosi lo intenderai.

Egli è uno artefice ricchissimo, che ha una sua figliuola un poco zoppa, ma bella per altro, buona et d' assai, et secondo li altri artefici è di buone genti, perchè ha li ufitii.[2] Io ho pensato che quando e' ti desse dumila fiorini contanti di suggello, et promectesseti aprirti una bottega d' arte di lana, et farviti compagno et governatore, per adventura sarebbe el bisogno tuo, pigliandola per moglie, perchè io crederei che ti avanzassi 1500 fiorini, et che con quelli et con lo aiuto del suocero tu potessi farti honore et bene Io ne ho ragionato così allargo, et mi è parso scrivertene adciò che tu ci pensi, et per il primo me ne advisi, et parendoti me ne dia commissione Cristo ti guardi.

In Firenze, addi 20 d' aprile 1514.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVEGLI.

Potrebbesi fare che tu stessi due o tre anni ad menarla, se tu volessi stare qualche tempo di costà.

Dno Giovanni di Fran.co Vernacci,
in Pera.

3.

At his Country Villa, 8th of June, 1517.[3]

Carissimo Giovanni. Come altra volta t' ho scripto, io non voglio che tu ti maravigli se io non ti scrivo, o se io sono stato pigro ad risponderti, perchè questo non nasce perchè io ti habbia sdimenticato et che io non ti stimi, come io soglio, perchè io ti stimo più ; perchè degli huomini si fa stima quanto e' vagliono, et havendo tu facto pruova d' huomo da bene et di valente, conviene che io ti ami più che io non solevo, et habbine

[1] The original autograph of this letter is among the MSS of Sir Thos Phillipps' library, now belonging to the Rev. E Fenwick, of Cheltenham. It is marked No. 11,017

[2] Although simple artizans, this family had *official* rights, *i.e.*, its members were qualified to fill political offices in the Republic

[3] The original autograph of this letter is in the State Archives of Florence. Only a portion of it was published in the "Opere," and with several blunders, which we now correct.

non che altro vanagloria, havendoti io allevato, et essendo la casa mia principio di quello bene che tu hai et che tu se' per havere. Ma sendomi io riducto a stare in villa per le adversità che io ho haute et ho, sto qualche volta uno mese che io non mi ricordo di me; si che se io strachuro el risponderti non è maraviglia.

Io ho haute tucte le tua lettere; et piacemi intendere che tu l' abbi facto et facci bene, nè potrei averne maggiore piacere. Et quando tu sarai expedito et che tu torni, la casa mia sarà sempre al tuo piacere, come è stata per il passato, anchora che povera et sgratiata.

Bernardo et Lodovico si fanno huomini, et spero daie alla tornata tua ricapito ad qualche uno per tuo mezzo.

La Marietta et tucta la brigata sta bene. Et vorrebbe la Marietta le portassi alla tua tornata una pezza di ciambellotto tanè, et agora da Dommasco, grosse et sottile. Et dice che l' anno ad rilucere, che quelle che tu mandasti altra volta non furno buone. Xpo. ti guardi.

A di 8 di giugno 1517.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVEGLI *in Villa.*

Domino Giovanni di Francesco
Vernacci, in Pera.
In Pera.

4.

Firenze, 5*th of January*, 1517-18.[1]

Carissimo Giovanni. Io mi maraviglo che tu mi dica per l' ultima tua non havere hauto mie lettere; perchè 4 mesi sono ti scripsi et ti feci scrivere ad Lodovico et Bernardo, che ti chiesono non so che favole; et dectonsi le lettere ad Alberto Canigiani.

Come io ti dixi per quella, se l'havessi hauta, tu non ti hai da maravigliare se io ti ho scripto di rado, perchè poi tu ti partisti, io ho havuto infiniti travagli, et di qualità che mi hanno condotto in termine che io posso fare poco bene ad altri, et mancho ad me Pur non di meno, come per quella ti dixi, la casa et ciò che mi resta è al tuo piacere, perchè fuori de' miei fighuoli, io non ho huomo che io stimi quanto te.

Io credo che le cose tue sieno migliorate assai in questa stanza che tu hai facta costì; et quando le sì trovassino nel termine ho inteso, io ti consiglerei ad piglare donna, et ad piglare una per la quale tu adcresceresti el parentado meco: et è bella et ha buona dota, et è da bene. Perhò vorrei che, havendo ad soprastare costì, o tu mi scrivessi o tu me lo facesti dire ad Alberto Canigiani, che opinione è la tua, et havendo animo ad torne, mi alluminassi in qualche modo dello essere tuo

Noi siamo sani et raccomandianci tucti ad te. Christo ti guardi.

A' di 5 di giennaio 1517.

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVEGLI, *in Firenze.*

Domino Giovanni de Francesco
Vernacci, in Pera.
In Pera.

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta i n 59. Autograph Machiavelli's published works only include the second paragraph of this letter, beginning: "*Come io,*" and ending with "*quanto te.*"

5.

Firenze, 25th of January, 1517-18.[1]

Carissimo Giovanni. Forse 20 dì fa ti scripsi dua lettere d' unc medesimo tenore, et le detti a dua persone ad ciò ne havessi almeno una: dipoi ho la tua tenuta a dì 4 di novembre. Et duolmi infino ad l'anima che tu non habbi haute mie lettere, perchè sei mesi sono ti scripsi et feciti scrivere una lettera per ciaschuno ad questi fanciulli, et ad ciò che tu ne possa havere qualcuna, farò anche una copia di questa.

Come per più mia ti ho detto, la sorte, poi che tu partisti, mi ha facto el peggio ha possuto; dimodochè io sono ridotto in termine da potere fare poco bene ad me, et meno ad altri. Et se io sono strascurato nel risponderti, io sono diventato così in nell' altre cose: pure, come io mi sia, et io et la casa siamo ad tuo piacere, com sono stato sempre.

Gran mercè di 'l caviale. Et la Marietta dice che alla tornata tua li porti una pezza di giambellotto tanè.

Per altra ti scrissi, che quando le cose tue fussin miglorate, in nel modo che io intendo et che io mi persuado, io ti conforterei ad piglare donna; et quando ti volgessi ad quello, ci è al presente qualche cosa per le mani che tu non potresti fare meglo; sichè io harei caro che sopra questa parte mi rispondessi qualche cosa.

Noi stiamo tucti sani, et io son tuo

A dì 25 di genaio 1517.

Tuo
NICCOLÒ MACHIAVEGLI
in Firenze.

Dno Giovànni di Francesco
Vernacci, in Pera
In Pera.

DOCUMENT VIII.

LETTER OF FRANCESCO GUICCIARDINI TO MACHIAVELLI.

Modena, 18th of May, 1521.[2]

Non havendo, Machiavello carissimo, nè tempo nè cervello da consiglarvi; neanche sendo solito a fare tale officio sanza el ducato, non voglio mancarvi di aiuto, acciò che, almanco colla reputatione, possiate conducere le vostre ardue imprese. Però vi mando a posta el presente balestriere, al quale ho imposto che venga con somma celerità, per essere cosa importantissima; in modo ne viene che la camicia non gli toccha le anche. Nè dubito che, tra el correre et quello che dirà lui alli astanti, si crederrà per tucti voi essere gran personaggio, et el maneggio vostro di altro che di frati. Et perchè la qualità del piego grosso faccia fede a l' hoste, vi ho messo certi avvisi venuti da Tunich, de' quali vi

[1] In the Quirinian Library at Brescia. Autograph.
[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta v, n. 111.

potrete valere, o mostrandoli o tenendoli in mano, secondo che giudicherete più expediente.

Scripsi hieri a messer Gismondo, voi esser persona rarissima. Mi ha risposto, pregando lo avisi in che consista questa vostra rarità. Non mi è parso replicarli, perchè stia più sospeso, et habbia causa di observarvi tucto. Valetevi, mentre che è il tempo, di questa reputatione. *Non enim semper pauperes habebitis vobiscum.* Avisate quando sarete expedito da quelli frati, tra' quali se mettessi la discordia, o almanco lasciassi tal seme che fussi per pullulare a qualche tempo, sarebbe la più egregia opera che mai facesti. Non la stimo però molto difficile, attesa la ambitione et malignità loro. Avisatemi, potendo venire.

In Modena, a di 18 di maggio 1521.

Vester FRANCISCUS DE GUICCIARDINIS *Gubernator.*

Al [*M*] *Ni*[*ccolò*] *Machiavelli nuntio fiorentino ec., in Carpi.*

DOCUMENT IX.

EPISTLE OF N. MACHIAVELLI ON THE METHOD OF RE-ORGANIZING THE MILITIA.[1]

Volendo V. S. intendere tucti l' interessi et ordini della Ordinanza, io non mi curerò d' essere un poco diffuso per satisfarle meglio, et repeterle quello, o in tucto o in maggior parte, che ad bocca le dissi. Io lascerò indreto el disputare se questo ordine è utile o no, et se fa per lo Stato vostro come per un altro, perchè voglio lasciare questa parte ad altri. Dirè solo, quando e' si volle ordinare, quello che fu iudicato necessario fare, et quello che io iudico bisogni fare hora, volendolo riadsummere.

Quando si disegnò ordinare questo Stato all' armi, et instruire huomini per militare ad piè, si iudicò fussi bene distinguerlo con le bandiere, et terminare le bandiere con e' termini del paese, et non con el numero delli huomini, et per questo si ordinò di collocare in ogni potesteria una bandiera, et sotto quella scrivere quelli pochi o quelli assai, secondo el numero delli huomini che si trovassino in tale potesteria. Ordinossi che la bandiera si havessi ad dare ad uno che habitassi nel castello dove faceva residenza el potestà, il che si fece sì perchè la bandiera fussi dove un cittadino stessi con el segno pubblico, sì *etiam* per levare le gare che tralle castella era per nascere, qualunque volta in una potesteria fussi più d' uno castello. Ordinoronsi connestaboli che stessino in su e' luoghi, che comandassino li huomini descripti sotto dette bandiere, dando ad qualcuno in governo più o meno bandiere, secondo le commodità del paese, et dovevogli la state ragunare sotto le bandiere, et tenerli nelli ordini una volta el mese, et el verno ogni dua mesi una volta. Havevono di stipendio e' connestaboli 9 ducati d' oro per paga, in 4 paghe l' anno, et havevono dua ducati el mese da tucte quelle potesterie che governa-

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta i n. 63. Autograph.

vano, che ciascuna concorreva a decti dua ducati per rata. Et haveva ogni conestabole un cancelliere habitante nel luogo, dove stava el connestabole, el quale teneva le listre di decti huomini, et haveva uno fiorino el mese, el quale li era pagato da tucte quelle potesterie che governava el conestabole.

Disputossi se gli era meglio tenerne scripti pochi o tenerne assai. Conclusesi fussi meglio ordinarne assai, perchè li assai servivono ad riputatione, et in loro era el piccolo numero et el buono, el quale non si poteva trarre de' pochi, et la spesa non era di più che d' arme et di qualche connestabole più. Et sempre mai fu iudicato che 'l tenerne assai scripti fussi bene et non male, et ad volersene valere fussi necessario haverne assai. Et intra l' altre ragioni ci è questa: tucti e' paesi o la maggior parte dove sono li scripti, sono paesi di confini: per tanto li huomini scripti havevono ad difendere el paese che gli habitavono o quello d' altri. Nel primo caso si giudicava tucti li scripti di quelli luoghi essere buoni et potervisi adoperare, et quanti più vene fussi scripti tanto meglio fussi; ma nel secondo caso, quando e' si havessi ad ire ad difendere la casa d' altri, allhora non levare tucti li scripti, ma torre quelli che fussino più cappati et più apti, et el resto lasciare ad casa, e' quali servissino per rispecto in ogni bisogno che fussi per nascere. Et però si ordinó, che ogni conestabole di tucti li scripti sua facessi tre cappate, el primo terzo de' migliori, l' altro de' secondi meglio, el terzo del restante. Et quando havevono ad levare fanti, toglièno di quello meglio, et così havendo el numero grosso, si valieno di quello haveno di bisogno, et facilmente, tanto che infino ad hoggi se ne era ordinato 55 bandiere, et tucta via si pensava di adcrescere el numero; in modo che per la experienza ne ho vista, se io havessi a dire e' difecti della Ordinanza passata, io direi solo questi due cioè: che fussino li scripti stati pochi et non bene armati. Et chi dice di ridurla ad poco numero, dice di volere dare briga ad sè et ad altri sanza fructo. Le ragioni che[1] costoro che la vogliono ridurre ad minor numero son queste: Et prima e' dicono che, togliendone meno, e' si può torre quelli che vengono volentieri, puossi fare con minore spesa, possonsi meglio satisfare, possonsi torre e' migliori, et aggravonsi meno e' paesi nonne scrivendo tanti; nè credo che possino allegare altre ragioni che queste. Ad che io rispondo, et prima quanto al venire volentieri: se voi volessi torre chi al tucto non può o non vuole venire, che la sarebbe una pazia; et così se voi volessi scrivere solamente quelli che vogliono venire, voi non adgiugneresti ad 2 mila in tucto el paese vostro. Et però bisogna cappare quelli che altri vuole; di poi ad farli stare contenti, non bisogna nè tucti preghi nè tucta forza, ma quella autorità et reverentia che ha ad havere el principe ne' subditi sua; di che ne nascie che coloro che, essendo domandati se volessino essere soldati, direbbono di no, sendo richiesti, vengono sanza ricusare; in modo che ad levarli poi per ire alle factioni, quelli che sono lasciati indreto l' hanno per male; donde io concludo, che tanta volontà troverrete voi in trentamila che in sei mila. Ma quanto alla spesa, et a poterli meglio satisfare, non ci è altra spesa che di qualche connestabole più et delle armi, la quale spesa è molto piccola, perchè un connestabole costa quanto uno huomo d' arme, et dell' armi

[1] The word *allegano*, self, understood here.

basta dare loro solamente lance, che è una favola mantenerle loro, perc l' altre armi si possono tenerle in munitioni, et darle loro a tempi, metterle loro in conto. Et se voi disegnassi pagarli, stando ad casa fare loro exentione, nel primo caso, ciò che voi disegnassi di dare, *eti* ad uno numero piccolo, sarebbe gittato via et spesa grave, perchè intera paga non saresti per dare loro ; dando loro tre o 4 ducati l' an per uno, questo sarebbe spesa grossa ad voi, et ad loro sì poca, che n li farebbe nè più ubbidienti nè più amorevoli nè più fermi ad cas Quanto al farli exenti, come voi entrate qui, voi fate confusione, perc li scripti nel distrecto non potete voi fare exenti, per li capituli havete c distrectuali ; se voi facessi exenti quelli del contado et non quelli d distrecto, farebbe disordine ; et però bisogna pensare ad altro benifi che ad pagarli, o ad exentione. Et se pure l' exentione si hanno ad fa riserbarle quando, con qualche opera virtuosa, e' se l' havessino guada nata : alhora gli altri harebbono patienza Et poi sempre fa bene tene l' uomini in speranza, et havere che promettere loro, quando e' si l bisogno di loro. E così concludo che, per spendere meno o per satisfa meglio, non bisogna torne meno ; et le satisfactioni che si ha ad fa loro, è farli riguardare da' rectori et da' magistrati di Firenze, che n sieno assassinati. Quanto ad poterli terre migliori, toglendone mino numero, dico che o voi vorrete torre ad punto quelli che sono sta soldati, et in questo caso voi non vene varrete ; perchè come e' sen ranno sonare un tamburo, egli anderanno via, et così voi credere havere 6 mila fanti. et voi nonne haresti nessuno ; o voi vorrete torre quelli che ad occhio vi paiono più apti ; in questo caso, quando v vedessi tucte l' Ordinanza vostre, voi non saperresti quale vi lasciar sendo tucti giovani et di buona presenza, et crederresti torre e' miglio et voi torresti e' più cattivi. Et altrimenti questa electione de' miglio non si può fare, perchè el fante si iudica o dalla presenza o dall' oper altra misura non ci è. Quanto allo aggravare meno e' paesi, io dico c questo non adgrava e' paesi, anzi li rileva, et per conto della securtà per conto della unione, per le ragioni che io vi dixi ad bocca ; nè pu dare graveza ad chi ha descripti in casa, non sene togliendo più che ur huomo per casa, et lasciando indreto quelli che sono soli, il che si pu fare per essere el paese vostro copiosissimo di huomini.

DOCUMENT X.

TWO SONNETS OF NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.[1]

I.

Niccolò Machiavelli ad M. Bernardo suo padre
In uilla a S° Cascano.[2]

Costor uiuute sono vn mese o piue
a noce a fichi a faue a carne seccha,
tal ch' ella fia malitia et non cilecca
el far si lunga stanza costá sue.
Come 'l bue fiesolano guarda a l'angùe
Arno, assetato, e' mocci se ne leccha ;
cosí fanno ei de l'uoua che ha la treccha,
et col becchaio del castrone e del bue.
Ma, per non fare afamar le marmegge,
Noi farèn motto drieto a daniello [?],
che forse già u' è qualcosa che legge ;
Perché, mangando sol pane et coltello,
fatti habián becchi che paion d' acegge,
et a pena tegnán gl' occhj a sportello.
Dite ad quel mio fratello
che uenga ad trīonfar con esso noj
l' ocha ch' havemo gouedí da uoi.

[1] Miscellaneous Codex in the Vatican, f. 673 and 674. Though not autographic, the writing is certainly of the sixteenth century, and perhaps of its earlier half. The first sonnet is unedited, and the second has some remarkable variations from the published text, which we indicate in the footnotes. We faithfully preserve the original spelling.

[2] This Sonnet is not easy to understand, and in some places most obscure Machiavelli addresses it to his father, Bernardo, in the country, who had sent him a goose, and seems to have urged him to care for his brothers, and for one of them in particular, since all lead a very frugal life at the villa. They—the brothers—so begins the Sonnet, have existed up there for more than a month on nothing but nuts, figs, beans, and bacon, and thus it would be a real injury to them and no joke (*malitia et non cilecca*) to stay longer there. Even as the ox of Fiesolo looks down on the Arno and licks his chops in vain with desire to drink from it, so they look on the eggs sold by the peasant-wife (*la trecca*), on the butcher's mutton and beef. But in order that they may not go on living up there only on salt meat, and thus starve the worms (*marmegge*) which are bred in that meat, I will speak to Daniello, who, perhaps, may be already reading a petition sent to him in my brother's behalf (*Farèn motto drieto, che forse già u'è qualcosa che legge.*) It is hard to guess the meaning of these words, nor can we discover who Daniel was. So we merely offer a possible interpretation of the sense.

Eating little else than dry bread (*pane e coltello*) hunger has lengthened our jaws to the likeness of woodcocks' beaks, and our eyes are only half-open (*a sportello*).

Bid that brother of mine to come meanwhile to feast on the goose you sent us last Thursday

At the end of the game, my Master Bernard, if things go on thus, you will buy ducks and geese, but will not eat of them.

Al fin del guoco poj
Messer Bernardo mio, uoj conperrete
Paperi et oche, et non ne mangerete.

2.

Nicolo Machiavellj al Mg° Guliano de' Medici, quando esso Nicolo era in prigone, nel xij, in sospeto.[1]

Io ho, Guliano, in gamba vn paio di geti
et sei tratti di fune in su le spalle;
l' antre fatighe mia ui uo contalle
poi che cosí si trattano e' poetj.
Menon pidochj questi parietj,
grossi et paffuti che paion farfalle;
né maj fu tanto puzo in Roncisualle,
né lá in Sardignia tra quegli arboretj,
Quanto è nel mio piú delicato ostello;
con un romor che par proprio che 'n terra
fulmini Gove tutto Mongibello.
L'un si scatena et quell' altro si sferra,
Combattono uscj, toppe et chiauistelli;
Quel' altro grida:—Troppo alto da terra!—
Quel che mi fa più guerra
è che dormendo, presso alla aurora,
io cominca' a sentir:—*Pro eis ora!*
Hor uadino in buon' hora
pur che la tua pietá uer me si uolga
che al padre et al bisauo el nome tolga.

finis.

[1] Here are the variants from the text as published by Aiazzi. Line 2, *fune* · corda, 3, *antre fatighe mia ui uo*: altre miserie mie non vo'. 4, *poi che*: perchè. *e'* · i 5, *menon*: menan. *questi*: queste 7, *mai fu*: fu mai. 8, *né la in*: nè in *tra* . fra. 9, *quanto è*: come; *più*: si 10, *par proprio*: proprio par 11, *tutto*: e tutto 12, *si scatena*: s' incatena, *quell'*: l'. *sferra*: disferra. 13, con batter toppe chiavi, e chiavistelli. 14, grida un altro che troppo alto è da terra 15, *fa* · fè' 16, *è*: fu 17, Cantando sentii dire: per voi s'ora 18, *uadino* vadano; *buon' hora*: malora. 19, *la tua*: vostra; *voglia*: volga. 20, Buon padre, e questi rei lacciuol ne sciogla. Special attention is called to the variant *vadino in buon' ora* in place of vadano in malora, since it attenuates, without destroying the bad impression produced by the Rosini version.

DOCUMENT XI.

MINUTES OF LETTERS, PATENTS, AND DECREES WRITTEN BY MACHIAVELLI WHEN SECRETARY TO THE FIVE PROCURATORS OF THE WALLS.[1]

Yhs Maria.

Al nome di Dio et della gloriosa Vergine Maria et di Santo Giovanni Batista advocato et protectore della nostra città. In questo libro si scriverrano le copie di tucte le lectere che gli spectabili procuratori delle mura della città di Firenze scriverranno in qualunque luogo et a qualunque persona I quali spectabili gonservatori presono l' uficio loro adì d' aprile[2] 1526, et debbono stare in oficio uno anno, da cominciare decto dì et da finire come segue : i nomi de' quali sono questi :

Il magnifico Ippolito di Giuliano de Medici,
Gherardo di Bertoldo Corsini,
Raffaello di Francesco Girolami,
Luigi di Pietro Guicciardini,
Dino di [3] Miniati.

I.

Scripsono decto dì a Galeotto de Medici oratore a Roma nella infrascritta sentenza :

Che ci piaceva la provisione haveva fatta il papa di mandare Antonio da Sangallo in Lombardia : et come Baccio Bigio sarà tornato si ordinerà che si faccia il disegno, et si manderà subito col parere nostro ancora. Et perciò si lascerà indietro pensare per hora al quartiere di Santo Spirito, et pensereno solo al dì qua d' Arno, et ci risolviamo cominciarci alla Porta alla Giustitia et al Canto del Prato, o vero alla Porticciola delle Mulina. Non ci pare da toccare Sangallo, perchè havendo a muovere quivi il letto di Mugnone, et per questo offendere qu alchuno, non ci pare da farlo hora, per non dare che dire ad alcuno ; ma, cominciata che fia la opera, non si harà rispecto, et chi fia tocco harà patienza.

[1] State Archives, Florence. With a few insignificant omissions, we give all written by Machiavelli, with notes to indicate passages by another hand. These documents fill up the gaps in Canestrini's edition of Machiavelli's writings on military topics

[2] The day of the month is not indicated. Both in this and the following letter Machiavelli must have made the mistake of dating them April instead of May. This is proved by his letter of the 1st of June, and by the "Provvisione" published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. vi. p 360, for the formation of the magistracy, or Board of the Five Procurators of the Walls, and that was voted by the Council of the Hundred the 9th of May, 1526. The Procurators were elected on the 19th. The confusion of dates may have been caused by the circumstance that these new magistrates began to fulfil some of their duties before their formal election took place.

[3] There is a gap here.

learned of those who came at this time to Italy, and an enthusiastic admirer of Plato, succeeded in inspiring Cosimo dei Medici with the same admiration; hence the origin of the Platonic Academy. An enormous enthusiasm, a prodigious literary activity then began in Florence, and at last we see the appearance of a new literary originality, and the beginning of a revival of philosophy.[1]

The first scholar to prove himself an original writer was Poggio Bracciolini, born at Terranova, near Arezzo, in 1380. After studying Greek with Crisolora, he went with Pope John XXIII. to the Council of Constance as a member of the Curia, and wearing the ecclésiastical dress, without, however, being in holy orders. This was a common custom among the learned, who—if unmarried—could in this manner obtain many advantages reserved for the clergy, of whom, however, they generally spoke much evil. Soon wearying of religious controversies and disputes, Bracciolini set out upon a journey, and in one of his letters gave an admirable description of the Falls of the Rhine and of the Baden springs; indeed, of these latter he gives a picture so vivid that to this day we can recognize its fidelity.[2] His Latin, though far more correct than that of his predecessors, is full of Italianisms and neologisms; but it has the spontaneousness and vivacity of a living language; instead of a mere reproduction, it is a real and genuine revival. Therefore it is in Poggio and some of his contemporaries that we must look for the flower of the Humanities, not in those who, like Bembo and Casa, gave us an imitation which, if more faithful, is also more mechanical and material. Poggio, throwing aside dictionaries and grammars, feels the need of writing as he speaks; is enthusiastic in the presence of Nature; seeks truth, and laughs at authorities; but still remains a man of learning, and this fact must ever be kept in sight. In the year 1416 he was present at the trial and execution of Jerome of Prague, and described everything in full in one of his best known letters to Bruni. The independence of mind with which this learned member of the Papal Curia dared to admire the heroism of Luther's precursor, and proclaim him worthy of immortality, is truly remarkable. But what was it that he admired in him? Not the martyr, not the reformer;—on the contrary, he asserts that if Jerome had indeed said anything against the Catholic faith, he well deserved his punishment. What he admired in

[1] *Vide* Voigt, Gibbon, and also my "Storia di G. Savonarola," vol. i. chap iv.

[2] G. Shepherd, "Vita di Poggio Bracciolini," translated from the English by T. Tonelli, with notes and additions. Florence: Ricci, 1825, 2 vols. *Vide* vol. i. p. 65 and fol. the translation of the letter quoted from.

3.

A dì primo di giugno.
A tutti i podestà del contado di Firenze.

Perchè noi voglamo per buona cagione havere notitia degli huomini che fa tucta cotesta tua potesteria, desideriamo che il più presto puoi, usando quanta diligenza ti è possibile, ci mandi una nota di tucti quelli che vi sono da i diciotto a' cinquanta anni; et terrai questo ordine: Manderai o per i sindachi o per i rectori de' popoli, et insieme con i tuoi messi farai fare a ciascuno, popolo per popolo, la sua lista. Et vedrai nel farla che si notino i lavoratori di terra da quegli che fanno l' altre arti; nè lascierai indietro pigionali o altri habitanti in detti popoli: et riductogli tucti in un quaderno con questa distintione, ce lo manderai. Di nuovo ti ricordiamo la diligenza, acciò che noi ci possiamo tenere sodisfacti della opera tua

Tenute et mandate a' di 6.[1]

4.

Oratori Florentino Rome, Ghaleocto de Medicis. Die VIIJ iunii.

Essendo venuto el S^or^ Vitello in Firenze come per l' ultima nostra vi scrivemo, et non potendo molto soprastare, ci parve da pigliare consiglio da lui come ci havamo ad ghovernare in questo principio circa questa nostra muraglia, non obstante che non ci fussi Baccio Bigio nè Antonio da Sanghallo; et andamo parte di noi con lui veggiendo questa parte del Prato Ognissanti, perchè stavamo in dubio se noi cominciavamo dalla Porticciola delle Mulina o dal Canto del Prato. Donde che havendo decto Signore in più giorni examinato tutto, si è resoluto che sia bene cominciare in sul canto, allegando che quello baluardo posto in quello luogho difenderà le mulina, la bocha d' Arno et la Porta al Prato: il che non potrebbe fare quello che si cominciasse alla Porticciola. Disputossi dipoi se questo baluardo si faceva tondo (come haveva disegnato il conte Pietro Navarra) o vero affacciato. Parveli da farlo affacciato, alleghando che non potendo e baluardi defendere se medesimi, ma havendo bisogno di esser difesi dalli altri fianchi, ne seguita che quando e' sono tondi, li altri fianchi ne guardono solo uno puncto; ma quando sono affacciati, possono tutte le faccie esser guardate. Disputamo dipoi s' egli era da farlo con le cannoniere da basso et da alto scoperte, secondo il disegno di quelli che si sono facti a Piacenza, o s' egli era da fare coperte quelle di sotto con palcho o volta che facessi piano a quelle artiglierie che havessino ad trarre di sopra. Parve a decto Signore che si faccia con l' artiglierie da basso coperte, parendoli quelli di Lombardia troppo grandi, et in quello luogho troppo sconcio, et non necessarii, affermando che, quando l' artiglierie coperte hanno quelli sfogatoi che possono havere queste stanno meglio.

[1] The beginning and end of this letter are in another hand. The portion written by Machiavelli will be indicated in a footnote.

Et come questa medesima ragione ci teneva ad non pensare per hora a' danari; ma che ci pareva da spendere di quegli per hora che il dipositario ha in mano, et di quelli che il papa volessi in questo principio sborsarsi, come ne ha oferto etc.

2.

A dì primo di giugno.
A Galeotto de Medici oratore a Roma.

Avanti hieri ricevemo la vostra de' 28 del passato, responsiva alla nostra de' 24. Commendiamo in prima assai la diligenza vostra, et ci piace che a Nostro Signore sodisfaccino i rispetti habbiamo nel cominciare questa opera sanza dare disagio ad alcuno, per non la fare odiosa prima che la sia per experienza cognosciuta et intesa. Vero è che noi non possiamo darle altro principio che ordinare la materia infino a tanto che noi non siamo resoluti della forma che hanno ad havere questi baluardi, et del modo del collocargli; il che non ci pare potere fare se prima non ci sono tutti questi ingegneri et altri con chi noi voglamo consiglarci. Et benchè il signore Vitello venisse hieri in Firenze, et che ci si aspetti fra duoi giorni Baccio Bigio, è necessario anchora che venga Antonio da Sangallo, del quale non habbiamo adviso alcuno. Et da poi che per commissione di Nostro Signore egli è ito veggiendo le terre fortificate di Lombardia, giudichiamo essere necessitati ad aspettarlo, perchè altrimenti questa sua gita non ci porterebbe alcuna utilità. Però con reverentia ricorderete a Nostro Signore che lo solleciti. Et qui il R.mo legato ha scritto a Bologna a quello governatore che, intendendo dove e' si truovi, lo solleciti allo expedirsi Et gli rispetti che si hanno ad havere nel murare al Prato o alla Giustitia, alle parti del di là d'Arno et a' riscontri de' monti, secondo che prudentemente ricorda Nostro Signore, si haranno tutti. Et così non siamo per mancare in qualunque cosa di diligenza, quando non ci manchi il modo a farlo; perchè il depositario ci ha facto qualche difficultà in pagare una piccola somma gli habbiamo infino a qui tracta, et crediamo per lo advenire sia per farla maggiore, allegando non havere danari per questo conto. Pertanto ci pare necessario che Nostro Signore ordini che noi ce ne possiamo valere. Et volendo la Sua Santità aiutarci d' alcuna cosa, sarebbe approposito hora, et farebbe molti buoni effecti. Et siamo ogni dì più di opinione che non sia bene toccare in questo principio le borse de' cittadini con nuova graveza. Perciò farete bene intendere questa parte alla Sua Santità. Et quanto al modello de' monti che Sua Santità desidera, come per altra si dixe, quando Baccio Bigio ci fia, non si perderà tempo, acciò il più presto si può se gli possa mandare, nè per noi si manchi di alcuna diligenza in tucto quello si debbe. Et perchè siamo di parere che, fatta la ricolta, si comincino i fossi per tucto di qua d' Arno, ciò è dalla parte de' tre quartieri, habbiamo scritto a tutti i podestà del nostro contado, che scrivino, popolo per popolo, quanti huomini fanno da 18 ad 50 anni, et che ne mandino nota particulare. Et si è anticipato, acciò ch' eglino habbiano tempo a fare questa descriptione appunto, et che noi possiamo, fornita la ricolta, entrare in simile opera gaglardamente.

et più spatio al fosso; et sempre, respecto all' argine, si potrà da quelli di dentro usare. Et tutte queste cose così disegnate per farsi hora e ad tempo, sono distribuite in modo che le risponderanno bene a tutte quelle cose che di là d'Arno si edificassino. Questo è tutto quello che si è col signor Vitello ragionato. Farete intendere tutto a N. Signore adciò che Sua Santità ne dica la sua opinione

Ricevemo hieri la vostra de' iiij del presente, et quanto al danaio che importa più d' ogni altra cosa, noi vi habbiamo a dire questo, come, considerato li tempi che si apparecchiano et le spese che potrieno sopravenire, noi siamo di quelli che se questa opera si havessi ad cominciare, che consiglieremo che la si soprasedesse, pensando che non fussi bene acchozare muraglia et guerra. Ma da poi che la è con tanta demonstratione et expectatione, noi non possiamo consigliare che la si lasci indrieto. Et parrebbeci che questo si potessi fare sanza torre assegnamento di importanza alla guerra, entrando in imprese che si spendessi poco et si facessi demonstratione assai. Questo baluardo che si è disegnato in sul Canto del Prato non ascenderebbe alla spesa di cinquemila ducati; li quali non si hanno ad spendere tutti ad un tratto, ma in iij o in iiij mesi che penerà ad fornirsi; in modo che, cominciando ad murare questo, et dall' altra parte, facta la ricolta, tenere due o tremila contadini intorno alle mura ad cavare li fossi (come si potrà sanza spesa fare), sarà la demonstratione grande et la spesa poca, nè tanta che l'habbia ad impedire le altre nostre necessità. Hora piacendo a N. S. questo modo, conviene che S. Santità ordini qui che di quelli tanti danari che habbiamo di bisogno, noi ne siamo provisti, perchè di qualunque luogo e' si habbino ad trarre, o dalla Parte[1] o d'altrove, noi habbiamo bisogno della auctorità sua; maximamente perchè circa 1600 ducati, che avanzavono alla Parte, più settimane sono, pervennono alle mani del depositario, dal quale non si potrebbono sanza la auctorità di quella trarre Infine, se noi sereno provisti, noi usereno quanta sollecitudine sapreno et potreno maggiore. Ma quando, respecto alli tempi, non si possa, ce ne rapportereno a l' iudicio et prudentia di Sua Santità. Non essendo anchora venuto Baccio Bigio, per avanzare tempo sopra 'l disegno che desidera N. S., habbiamo imposto a Giovanfrancesco da San Ghallo cominci ad levarlo; et venuto Baccio, li accozeremo insieme et acciò che 'l sia più perfecto et possa meglio satisfare.[2]

5.

A dì IJ di giennaio 1526.

Perchè ci occorre havere bisogno di [3] huomini usi a maneggiare la terra, t' imponiamo che con quanta diligentia puoi gli provvegga, et sotto uno capo che gli conduca ce li mandi, et con tale presteza che sieno rapresentati venerdì proximo, che sareno adì 4 del presente, alla porta a San Giorgio ad uno nostro commissario: il che fa' che non manchi per quanto stimi la gratia nostra. Et fa' loro intendere che saranno qui pagati

[1] The Captains of the Guelph Party.

[2] Here follows in Machiavelli's hand a mem. of 18 *Potesterie* and the respective number of men (50, 60, or 150) to be furnished by them according to the circular we publish

[3] Blank to be filled in in the different copies of this circular, with the number of men to be furnished by each *Potesteria*, according to the Note mentioned above.

Disegnossi pertanto sopra decto Canto del Prato uno baluardo affacciato, che abraccia una torre che è in su decto canto, il quale ha le sua maggior faccie lunghe l' una lxx[ta] braccia et le minori circa xx. Et disegnamo che le mura che sono dalla parte di verso la porta sieno grosse braccia viij, et quelle che sono di verso le mulina, per non potere esser battute, sieno braccia vj. Et dalle mura del baluardo alla torre che rimane drento, sono per tutto quelli spatii che voi potrete vedere per il disegno vi mandiamo con questa. Ha da basso iiij cannoniere, due per fianco; et disegniamo che le sieno alte dal piano del fosso braccia iiij; et che da decto piano le sua mura alte braccia xviij. Et che si gittino archi da (*)[1] la torre al muro nuovo; et sopra quegli archi si faccia un palco che habbia di parapetto due braccia, tanto che l'artigferie che fieno di sotto hanno di sfogatoio tutto quello spatio, delle xviij braccia che sono alte le mura, che non sarà dal parapetto et dal palco mangiato. Al quale sfogatoio si aggiugne la rarità del palco, et le aperture che si faranno di verso la città per potere entrare in detto baluardo. Gl' anguli di questo baluardo come voi vedete vengono acuti, et noi sappiamo bene che questi anguli sono più deboli che i recti et che gli ottusi: nondimeno si sono fatti così, perchè a volergli fare ottusi ci bisognava entrare in maggiore largheza, et così fatti ci paiono assai forti per havere, quelli duoi maxime che possono essere battuti, dieci braccia di sodo. La torre che resta di mezo disegniamo abbassarla infino al piano del palco, acciò che lo spatio delle artiglerie che hanno a trarre di sopra sia largo. Questo è in effecto come, secondo il consiglo del signore Vitello, ci parrebbe da farlo, di che vi se ne manda il disegno, acciò possiate mostrare tucto a nostro Signore, et intendere la opinione di Sua Santità.

Et perchè ci parve, (*)[2] poi che noi eravamo in quello luogho, examinare el modo di fortificare dalle Mulina alla Porta al Prato, mandiamo el disegno di tutta decta fortificatione, per il quale vedrete come si disegna abracciare la Porta al Prato con uno baluardo chiuso, che non habbia uscita, et la porta solo serva ad entrare in quello; et per uscire della città si facci una porta di nuovo allato a decto baluardo di verso el Canto del Prato. Disegnasi quella torretta che è nel mezo, infra la Porta et il Canto, bucarla dalla parte di drento, et aprirla um poco da ogni fianco, tanto che duoi vi si possino con li archobusi maneggiare. Disegnasi fasciare le Mulina con uno muro secondo vedrete in sul disegno, facendo um poco di ricepto fra 'l muro vechio et il nuovo che tiri artiglierie per li fossi. Pare anchora da fare una piactaforma in mezo tra le Mulina et il Canto che giri da ogni banda per il fosso. Disegnasi fare il fosso large 30 braccia, seguitando el consiglio di Pietro Navarra, che danna i fossi di maggior largheza. Vero è che al signor Vitello pare che ad canto a' fossi si faccia una via largha almeno x braccia; et che la terra che si ha ad cavare del fosso, quella cioè che non si metterà dentro alle mura, per far terrapieno, si metta di là da questa via, et se ne faccia uno argine alto 3 braccia da decta via, il quale argine si spargha in modo verso li campi che non facci grotta et parapetto alli inimici. Questa via disse esser necessaria per poter girare le mura di fuora, per dare adiuto,

[1] The portion between this and the corresponding asterisk lower down, is written by Machiavelli. [2] The rest is written by another hand.

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da noi giorno per giorno, secondo l'opere di questi tempi. Et farai che portino il terzo vangha, il terzo zappa, et il terzo pala. Oltre a di questo comanderai a tutti i tuoi subditi che ci conduchino fra 3 dì da hoggi pure alla porta a San Giorgio una soma di stipa per casa; la quale ancora sarà pagata da noi giusto prezo *Bene vale.*[1]

DOCUMENT XII.

LETTER OF GUIDO MACHIAVELLI TO HIS FATHER NICCOLÒ.

Firenze, 17th April, 1527.[2]

Jhs.

Honorando Padre, salute etc Per dare risposta alla vostra dei ij d' aprile, per la quale intendiamo voi esser sano, che Idio ne sia laudato, et a lui piaccia mantenervi.

Non vi si scripse di Totto, per non l avere ancora riscoso; ma intendiamo dal balio, non esser ancora guarito degli ochi; ma dice, va tutta via migliorando; si che statene di buona voglia. El mulectino non s' è ancora mandato in Monte Pugliano, per non esser l' erbe ancora rimesse; ma comunche il tempo si ferma, vi si manderà a ugni modo.

Per lectera vostra a mona Marietta intendemo chome havete compero così bella catena alla Baccina, che non fa mai altro che pensare a questa bella catenuza, et pregare Idio per voi, et che vi faccia tornare presto.

A' lanziginec non vi pensiamo più; perchè ci avete promesso di volere esser con esso noi, se nulla fussi. Sì che mona Marietta non à più pensiero.

Vi priegiamo ci scriviate quando i nimici facessino pensiero di venire a' danni nostri, perchè habiamo ancora di molte cose in villa. vino et olio; benchè habiamo condocto quagiù dell' olio venti o venti tre barili; et evi le lecta. Le qua' cose ci scrivesti, sapessimo dal Sagrino, se lui le voleva in casa, il che lui l' à acceptate. Ve ne priegamo, perchè a condurre tante bazice a Santo Cassiano, bisognia dua over tre di di tempo

Noi siamo tutti sani, et io mi sento benissimo, et comincierò questa Pasqua, quanto Baccio sia guarito, a sonare et cantare et fare contra punto a tre. Et se l' uno et l'altro istarà sano, spero tra un mese potere fare sanza lui. ch' a Dio piaccia. Della gramatica io entro oggi a' participii; et àmmi lecto ser Luca quasi il primo di Ovidio Metamorphoseos; el quale vi voglio, comunche voi siate tornato, dire tutto a mente. Mona Marietta si raccomanda a voi, et vi manda 2 camicie, 2 sciugatoi, 2 berrettini, 3 paia di calcetti, et 4 fazoletti. Et vi prega torniate presto, et noi tutti insieme. Christo vi guardi, et in prosperità vi mantenga.

Di Firenze, a' dì 17 d' aprile MDXXVII.

Vostro GUIDO MACHIAVELLI, *in Firenze.*

Al suo honorando padre Niccolò
Machiavegli, in Furlì. In
Furlì.

[1] Here follows, still in Machiavelli's hand, a mem. of 24 *Potesterie*, or *vicariati*, which were to supply sappers and brushwood for fascines; likewise a mem. of 31 *Potesterie*, to which circulars were to be sent.

[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta v. n.° 21.

him was the courage of a Cato and of a Mutius Scævola; he extolled "his clear, sweet, and sonorous voice; the nobility of his gestures, so well adapted either to express indignation or excite compassion; the eloquence and learning with which, at the foot of the pile, he quoted Socrates, Anaxagoras, Plato, and the Fathers."[1]

Soon we find Poggio leaving Constance altogether, for the purpose of making long journeys. He traversed Switzerland and Germany, hunting through monasteries in search of old manuscripts, of which he was the most favoured discoverer in that century. To him we owe works of Quintilian, Valerius Flaccus, Cicero, Silius Italicus, Ammianust Marcellinus, Lucretius, Tertullian, Plautus, Petronius, &c. When the news of these discoveries reached Florence, the city was wild with joy, and Bruni wrote to him, that above all, by the discovery of Quintilian, he had made himself the second father of Roman eloquence. "All the people of Italy," wrote he, "should go forth to meet the great writer whom thou hast delivered from the hands of the barbarians."[2] Many others then followed his example in searching for manuscripts It was said that Aurispa had brought from Constantinople no less than two hundred and thirty-eight codices; and the fable was spread that Guarino's hair turned suddenly white through his having lost in a shipwreck many codices that he was bringing to Italy from the East.[3] But no one equalled Bracciolini in diligence and good fortune.

In England, however, while with Cardinal Beaufort, he found himself isolated, in the company of wealthy uncultured nobles, who passed the chief part of their life in eating and drinking.[4] During those dinners, which sometimes lasted four hours, he was obliged to rise from time to time and bathe his eyes with cold water, in order to keep himself awake.[5] Yet the country offered, by its novelty, a vast field of observation to Bracciolini, who had the acuteness to notice that even in those days it was a special characteristic of the English aristocracy readily to admit within its ranks men who had raised themselves from the middle classes[6] But the novelty of the country and the variety of customs and characters, all of which he noticed and which occupied his mind,

[1] Poggii, "Opera," Basle edition, pp. 301–305.
[2] L. Aretini, "Epist." bk. iv. ep. 5.
[3] Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Italiana," vol. vi. p. 118; Rosmini, "Vita e disciplina di Guarino Veronese," Brescia, 1805–6.
[4] *Vide* his letter to Niccoli, dated 29th October, 1420, published in the translation of Shepherd's Work, vol. i. p. 111, Note C.
[5] Vespasiano, "Vita di Poggio Bracciolini," s. I.
[6] Poggii, "Opera," p. 69.

against the Medici, and was compelled to leave Florence. Then he began to write satires aimed at the learned who had been his friends and colleagues, and Bracciolini replied to him in his "Invettive." It was a warfare of indecent insults, in which the two scholars showed off their strength in rhetoric and their masterly Latinity. Filelfo had the advantage of writing in verse, and therefore his insults were easier to retain in the memory; but Bracciolini, having greater talent and wit, was better able, by writing in prose, to express all that he wished to say. He repulsed the abuse which "Filelfo had vomited from the fetid sewer of his mouth," and attributed his adversary's foulness of language to the education he had received from his mother, "whose trade it was to clean the entrails of beasts; it was her stench therefore that now emanated from her son."[1] He accused him of having seduced the daughter of his master, in order to marry her and then make a traffic of her honour, and wound up by offering him a crown worthy of so much foulness.[2] Not content with all this, they even accused each other of vices which modesty forbids us to mention in these days, but of which these learned scholars were accustomed to speak without reserve and almost in jest, after the manner of Greek and Roman writers

Our minds shrink from dwelling on the frightful moral depravity with which all these things saturated the Italian spirit. And Poggio composed these much-praised invectives of his in a delightful villa, full of statues, busts, and ancient coins of which he made use to gain a closer knowledge of antiquity, thus inaugurating the study of archæology, as he had already done in Rome by describing its monuments and remains. He considered this to be the fit paradise for a chosen spirit, for an encyclopædic man of letters destined to immortality At the age of fifty-five, in order to marry a young lady of high birth, he abandoned the woman with whom he had lived up to that time, and who had made him the father of fourteen children, of whom four survivors, legitimized by him, were left destitute by this marriage. But he remedied this by writing a dialogue: *An seni sit uxor ducenda*, in which he defended his own cause. An elegant Latin composi-

[1] "Verum nequaquam mirum videri debet, cum eius mater Arimini dudum in purgandis ventribus, et intestinis sordi deluendis quæstum fecerit, maternæ artis fœtorem redolere Haesit naribus filii sagacis materni exercitii attractata putredo et continui stercoris fœteris halitus" (Poggii, "Opera," p. 165)

[2] "At stercorea corona ornabuntur fœtentes crines priapei vati" (Poggii, "Opera," p 167) It is impossible to give the most obscene fragments of Poggio's "Invettive" and Filelfo's "Satire" Mons. Nisard in his "Gladiateurs," &c, attempted to give several in the appendices to his "Vita del Filelfo e di Poggio;" but he too found it impossible to continue.

were not sufficient recompense for the slight account in which the learned were held there, and he, therefore, sighed for his native land.

And in a short time we find him established in Rome as secretary to the Roman Curia during the reign of Martin V. There at last he was in his true element. He used to spend the long winter evenings with his colleagues, in a room of the Cancelleria, which went by the name of *the place of lies* (*il bugiale, sive mendaciorum officina*), because there they amused each other with anecdotes, both true and false, and more or less indecent, in which they ridiculed the Pope, the Cardinals, and even the dogmas of the religion in defence of which they wrote Briefs. In the morning he attended to the slight duties of his office, and composed literary works, among others his dialogues on avarice and hypocrisy—vices which he declared to be peculiar to the clergy—and, therefore, severely scourged. But no serious motive is to be found in these satires; only the same biting and sceptical spirit shown by our comic writers and novelists, who, like Poggio, laughed at the faith which they professed. These latter sought to paint the manners of the day; Poggio and the other men of learning chiefly desired to show the ease with which they could use the Latin tongue on all kinds of subjects, sacred or profane, serious, comic, or obscene. That was all.

In fact Bracciolini, notwithstanding his onslaughts on the corrupt manners of the clergy, led a very intemperate life. And when Cardinal St. Angelo reproved him for having children, which was unfitting to an ecclesiastic, and still more for having them by a mistress, which was unfitting to a layman; he replied without at all losing countenance: "I have children, and that is fitting to a layman; I have them by a mistress, and that is an old custom of the clergy." And farther on in the letter he tells the story of an Abbé who presented a son of his to Martin V., and receiving a reproof, answered, amid the laughter of the Curia, that he had four others also ready and willing to take up arms for His Holiness.[1]

Coming to Florence with Pope Eugene IV., he was thrown among the learned men gathered together there, and drawn into very violent disputes with the restless Filelfo, who was then teaching in the University. This scholar, who had been to Constantinople and there married a Greek wife, was almost the only man in Italy who could then speak and write the language of Plato and Aristotle. He worried every one by his boundless vanity and restlessness of character; at last he made attacks

[1] *Vide* Shepherd's Work, vol. i. pp. 184-85.

But even if the passions were unreal, there was terrible reality in the moral harm resulting from these miserable shows.

We gladly turn aside from these foul places, for we have as yet by no means fully described the prodigious activity of Poggio Bracciolini. Next to epistles, orations were the compositions most in favour with the learned. They crowded into these all possible reminiscences of antiquity, all possible figures of rhetoric. A good memory was frequently the only faculty necessary to secure certain success—"he had an endless memory, he quoted every one of the ancient writers"—was the eulogium Vespasiano used to make on the most celebrated of these orators, who seemed to have some thesaurus from which to draw inspiration for their own eloquence. Were a general mentioned, instantly a list of great battles was given: a poet, and forth came a torrent of precepts from Horace or Quintilian. The real subject disappeared before the desire to turn everything into an opportunity of gaining greater familiarity with antiquity; style was false, artifice continual, exaggerations innumerable, and all funeral orations became apotheoses. Once Filelfo, wishing to attack one of his persecutors, took the chair and began in Italian; "Who is the cause of so many suspicions? Who is the originator of so many insults? Who is the author of so many outrages? Who and what is this man? Shall I name so great a monster? Shall I designate such a Cerberus? Shall I tell you who he is? Certainly I must tell you, I say it, I will say it, were it at the cost of my life. He is the accursed, the monstrous, the detestable, the abominable. . . . Ah! Filelfo, hold thy peace, for heaven's sake utter not his name! He who is incapable of controlling himself, is ill-fitted to blame the intolerance and inconstancy of another."[1] This was what was then considered a model of eloquence; hence Pius II. was right in saying that a skilful orator could only stir hearers of small intelligence.[2] A Frenchman of good taste, the Cardinal d'Estouteville, when listening to an eulogy on St. Thomas of Aquinas, delivered by Valla, could not refrain from exclaiming: "But this man is stark mad!"[3] Yet these orations were then so much in vogue, that they were considered indispensable on all great occasions, whether a proclamation of peace, the presentation of an ambassador, or any other public or private solemnity. Every court, every government, sometimes even wealthy families, had their official orator. And precisely as now-a-days there are few

[1] Rosmini, "Vita di Filelfo," vol. i. doc. ix. p. 125.
[2] Platina, "Vita di Pii II."
[3] Gasparo Veronese quoted by Voigt. *Vide* "Die Wiederbelebung," &c., p. 437.

tion was all that was needed to solve the hardest problems of existence, and soothe his own conscience. To a man of learning words were of greater value than facts; to be eloquent in the praise of virtue was as good as being virtuous, and the greatest of mankind owed their immortality solely to the eloquence with which their lives had been narrated by first-rate writers. Where would be the fame of Hannibal or Scipio, of Alexander or Alcibiades, without Livy, without Plutarch? He who could write Latin with eloquence, was not only sure of his own immortality, but could bestow it upon others at his own good pleasure.

From Tuscany Poggio returned to Rome, and during the pontificate of Nicholas V., profited by the wide liberty accorded to the learned, to publish attacks on priests and friars and the "Liber Facetiarum, in which he collected all the satires and indecencies that used to be related in the *bugiale*. In the preface to this book, he plainly stated that his object was to show how the Latin tongue ought and might be made to express everything. In vain the more rigorous blamed this old man of seventy for thus contaminating his white hairs: since Panormita had published his "Hermaphroditus," the Italian ear was shocked by nothing, and Poggio tranquilly passed his time in writing obscenities and keeping up literary quarrels. About this time he had one with Trapezunzio that ended in blows; another with Valla, and this gave rise to a new series of "Invectivæ" on his part, and on his opponent's to an "Antidotus in Poggium." The question turned on the worth of the Latinity and the grammatical rules asserted in the "Elegantiæ," of Valla, who, possessed of a superior critical faculty, came off victor in the fight. And in this quarrel also the disputants rivalled each other in scandalous indecency. Accused of every vice that was most horrible, Valla gave as good as he got, without much concern for his own defence, and indeed often showing a remarkable amount of cynicism. Thus, when Poggio accused him of having seduced his own sister's maid, he replied merrily that he had wished to prove the falsity of his brother-in-law's assertion, namely, that his chastity did not proceed from virtue.[1] It would, however, be a great mistake to measure by the violence of these writers' insults the force of their passions. The "Invectivæ" were almost always simple exercises of rhetoric; the two disputants came down into the arena in the spirit of performers about to give a display of their dexterity and nudity.

[1] "Volui itaque eis ostendere id quod facerem non vitium esse corporis, sed animi virtutem" ("Antidotus," p. 222).

Poggio Bracciolini, although the chief, was not the only representative of this second period of Italian learning; he was one of a numerous band of other scholars, and of these the most celebrated was Leonardo Bruni, born in 1369, at Arezzo, and known therefore as the Aretino. We have already seen how, on the arrival of Crisolora in Florence, he threw aside his legal studies to devote himself entirely to Greek; and so rapid was his progress that he was soon qualified to translate not only the principal historians and orators, but also the philosophers of Greece. He thereby rendered an immense service to literature, for his versions of the classic authors were the first from the original Greek, and were not only written in elegant Latin, but were faithful translations, and appeared at a moment when the need for them was great and universal. His versions of the "Apologia" of Socrates, the "Phaedo," "Krito," "Gorgias," and "Phaedrus" of Plato, and those of the Economical and Political Ethics of Aristotle, were one of the great literary events of the age. On the one hand it was a revelation of the Platonic philosophy, till then almost unknown in Italy; on the other, it was the first appearance of what was called the true Aristotle, unknown in the Middle Ages. The learned could now admire the eloquence which Petrarch had vainly sought in the travestied and almost barbarous Aristotle of his time; they were no longer compelled to study the Greek schoolman instead of the Greek philosopher.

Thus Bruni gave an immense impulse to philosophy and criticism. His, in fact, was a critical mind, as we see even by his Epistles, in which, for the first time, we find the opinion maintained that Italian was derived from the spoken Latin, which differed from the written tongue, and this opinion he enforced by arguments which show this scholar of the fifteenth century to have been in some respects a true precursor of modern philology.[1] These qualities are still more noticeable in his historical works, first of which is his "Storia di Firenze," from its origin down to 1401 Of this we may repeat what we have already said of Bracciolini's history, which is its continuation. Here also the internal conditions of the Republic are neglected to make room for descriptions of great battles, speeches, and dissertations. Here, too, local colouring is wanting, and Florentines appear in a Roman dress. Bruni, as we have before remarked, is inferior to Bracciolini in ease of style; but he forestalled his friend in forsaking the

[1] This letter is addressed to Flavio Biondo of Forlì, and is also to be found in the first number of a work now in course of publication, entitled, "I due primi secoli della Letteratura Italiana," by A. Bartoli: Milan, Vallardi. The author, like other men of learning, holds it in due consideration.

fêtes without music, so in those times a Latin discourse in verse or prose was the choicest diversion of every cultured company. Numbers of these discourses were printed, but these were the minority; Italian libraries contain hundreds still inedited. But in all this abundance no examples of real eloquence are to be found, with the exception of a few of the orations of Pius II., whose utterances were not always mere literary exercises, but who often spoke with some definite aim, and did not then pour forth floods of rhetoric.

Poggio Bracciolini was held to be one of the first masters of oratory, and seldom lost an opportunity of making an oration, particularly in praise of deceased literary friends. The ease of his style, though often sinking into prolix verbosity, his vivacity, dash and good sense, render him more readable than the others, but never eloquent. The last years of his life were passed in Florence, where, on the death of Carlo Marsuppini (April 24, 1453), he was made secretary of the Republic, and wrote his last work, a "History of Florence" from 1350 to 1455. In this work, following the example of Leonardo Bruni, he forsakes the manner of the Florentine chroniclers, to the loss of the graphic power and vivacity of which they had given such splendid examples. There is not a single anecdote or narrative drawn from life, not a trace of a personal knowledge of events in the midst of which the author had really lived and in which he had taken his part. He seems to be narrating deeds of the Greeks and Romans; he never deigns to speak of the internal affairs of the Republic; we hear only of great battles, and listen to long and solemn Latin speeches recited by Florentines always in the Roman dress. In point of fact Poggio's great object was the imitation of Livy's epic narrative, and although this made him lose the spontaneous qualities of the old chroniclers, it at least compelled him to try and link facts together in a literary if not a scientific way. And thus began the transformation of the chronicle into history. He and Bruni were the precursors of Machiavelli and Guicciardini, although in every respect very inferior to them. Of the two, Bruni is the better critic, while Bracciolini has an easier style, that, however, is frequently verbose. Sannazzaro accused the latter of overweening partiality for his own country;[1] but that consisted chiefly in the tone he assumed in always speaking of Florence as though it were the Republic of Rome.

[1] Sannazzaro wrote:

"Dum patriam laudat, damnat dum Poggius hostem;
Nec malus est civis, nec bonus historicus"

living *literati*, pronounced his oration in the presence of the chief magistrates of the Republic.

Yet no one can now read this oration without experiencing great amazement that so *barocco* a composition should have aroused such universal applause in an age of so much culture and devotion to the classics. Manetti begins by declaring that had it been possible for the immortal muses (*immortales Musæ, divinæque Camœnæ*), to make a Latin discourse and weep in public, they would hardly have left the task to him on so solemn an occasion. Then narrating Bruni's life, he seizes the occasion of his nomination as secretary to the Republic, to run through the history of Florence. He touches on his works and then branches off into a dissertation on Greek and Latin authors, and particularly on Cicero and Livy, placing Bruni above both, for the important reason that the former not only translated from the Greek like the one, but also wrote history like the other, thus uniting in himself the merits of both. Then, the moment having arrived for placing the wreath on the head of his deceased friend, he speaks of the antiquity of this usage, and of the various wreaths, *civica, muralis, obsidionalis, castrensis, navalis*, and continues his descriptions through five large and closely written pages. He asserts that Bruni had earned the wreath by his true poetic gifts, and then digresses into a series of empty phrases, in explanation of the signification of the word poet, and the nature of poetry; winding up with a pompous apostrophe, and crowning "the happy and immortal slumber of the marvellous star of the Latins."[1]

Manetti was born at Florence in 1396, and at the age of twenty-five, on his father's death, left his counter to give himself up to study with such exceeding ardour, that he only allowed himself five hours' sleep. His house had a door opening into the garden of Santo Spirito, where he used to study, and for nine years he never crossed the Arno into the centre of the town.[2] He acquired Latin, Greek, and Hebrew; wrote with great ease, and had an "eternal, immortal" memory according to Vespasiano's usual phrase. But his chief excellence lay in his moral character. A practised man of business, religious, steadfast, and truly honest, the principal effect of his studies was to give him a lofty ideal of life, to which he was ever faithful in the various offices with which he was entrusted. Vicar and captain of the Republic in many cities distracted by hostile factions, he was able to inflict very severe sentences, and impose heavy taxes, without ever being

[1] *Vide* this oration in the preface to Bruni's "Epistole."
[2] Vespasiano, "Vita di G. Manetti," sec. ii.

track of the chroniclers, and as he did not write of contemporary events, had a freer scope for the display of his critical faculty. In fact it does Aretino the greatest honour that he should have been the first who, rejecting at once all the fables current on the origin of Florence, sought out in the classical writers the primitive history of the Etruscans, and applied the same critical sagacity to that of the Middle Ages.[1] Elsewhere we shall have occasion to return to these historical works; for the present it is enough to remark that criticism gradually became one of the principal occupations of this century, that was so eager in demolishing the past.

Leonardo Aretino was a man of very great personal weight in Florence, where he filled many important offices, among others, during a long period, that of secretary to the Republic.[2] Dying in 1444, he was succeeded by Carlo Marsuppini, of Arezzo, called therefore Carlo Aretino. This latter wrote little, and nothing of any importance; he was, however, a renowned teacher, the fortunate rival of Filelfo in the Florentine Studio, and enjoyed great fame, chiefly owing to the strength of his memory, which enabled him to make a distinguished figure in public discourses. His first lecture was loudly applauded, because, as Vespasian tells us, "the Greeks and Latins had no writer left unquoted by Messer Carlo that morning."[3] He displayed a great contempt for Christianity, and a vast admiration for the Pagan religion.[4] To him, as to Bruni, solemn funeral honours were decreed by the Republic. Both bore the poet's laurels on their bier; both repose in Santa Croce, the one opposite the other, beneath monuments equally elegant, with inscriptions equally pompous, despite the great distance between the talent of the one and the other. Marsuppini's funeral eulogy was read by one of his pupils, Matteo Palmieri; that of Bruni, on the other hand, was read by another first-rate literary man, and was a solemn event. It was in the centre of the public square, standing beside the bier on which lay Bruni's body, with his volume of "Storia Fiorentina" on his breast, that Giannozzo Manetti, by many esteemed the first of

[1] An elegant edition of this History, with Donato Accinoli's translation, was published at Florence, 1856–60, 3 vols. 8vo. Signor Cirillo Monzani published an accurate "Discorso" on Bruni in the "Archivio Storico," new series, vol. v. part 1, pp 29–59; part 2, pp 3–34. See also the remarks upon Bracciolini's and Bruni's histories made by Gervinus in his work, "Florentinische Historiographise," published in the vol. entitled, "Historische Schriften": Frankfurt, à M., 1833.

[2] The first time in 1410 for a single year; the second from 1427 to 1444.

[3] Vespasiano, "Vita di Carlo d'Arezzo."

[4] Ibid, Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Italiana."

precisely because his life is a proof that no profession or age, however corrupt, need prevent a man from preserving true nobility of mind. The same Pagan learning that was to entail so great moral ruin on Italy was used by him for the elevation of his whole nature. Indeed it is plainly an error, though a very common one, to condemn in one sweeping sentence the general character of the learned men. We have already found ourselves forced to admire Coluccio Salutati and Palla Strozzi; many other worthy characters are to be found among the less known men. This is sufficiently proved by the biographies of Vespasiano whose excessive ingenuousness may excite our blame, but can leave no doubt of the sincerity of his admiration for virtue He tells us of Messer Zembrino da Pistoia, who taught "not only letters, but morals," and abandoning every other employment to devote himself to philosophy, "lived a frugal and temperate life, giving all he had to the poor, and contenting himself with hermit's fare. Also he was of "thoroughly sincere mind, generous, without fraud or malice, as all men ought to be." Speaking of Maestro Paolo, a Florentine, learned in Greek, Latin, the seven liberal arts, and also given to astronomy, he adds, that he never held intercourse with woman; slept in his clothes upon a board beside his writing table; lived on vegetables and fruit; "was devoted to virtue, and had placed therein his every hope . . . When not at study, he would go and take care of some friend."[1] All this notwithstanding, it cannot be denied that the greater number of these *eruditi* had no force of character, although ardently devoted to learning. The continued exercise of the intelligence on questions that were frequently of mere form; the wandering life of courtiers compelled to gain their bread by the sale of eulogiums; the perpetual rivalries; the absence of all spirit of brotherhood or caste in the exercise of their common work or office, and their moral destructiveness did not help to ennoble their characters. If, too, it be added, that all this was going on at a moment in which liberty was already extinguished, society decayed, religion scandalously profaned by the Popes; it will be easily understood what profound moral corruption must have been rife in Italy, when the learned were the expositors of virtue, the apportioners of glory, the representatives of public opinion. But still we must not refuse to acknowledge the handful of righteous men who escaped from the general wreck. If we do not impartially take into account all the elements of culture and of the diverse natures of men, we stand in danger of never being able to understand how the Italian genius then contrived, amid so many dangers, to find sufficient

[1] See in Vespasiano the two "Vite di Zembrino Pistolese e di Maestro Pagolo."

accused of partiality. He refused to accept the customary donations, giving liberally from his own purse to all who were in need, and establishing peace and concord wherever he went. He passed his leisure hours in writing lives of Socrates and Seneca, *De dignitate et excellentiâ hominis*, and the history of the cities which he successively inhabited. As a learned man he chiefly shone by his orations, delivered in the various ambassadorial missions on which he was sent in consequence of his celebrity as an orator. In Rome, Naples, Genoa, and Venice, he was received with the honours of royalty; and so high was his reputation, that by means of a Latin letter, he succeeded in regaining from the Condottiere Piccinini eight horses that had been stolen by some soldiers of his band. Being sent to congratulate Nicholas V. on his election, in the name of the republic of Florence, people crowded from the neighbouring cities to hear him, and the Pope listened to him with such absorbed attention, that a prelate beside him nudged his elbow several times thinking that his Holiness had fallen asleep. "When the oration was over, everybody shook hands with the Florentines as though Pisa and its territory were won,"[1] and the Venetian Cardinals wrote home to their government that they ought to send an orator equal to Manetti for the sake of the dignity of the State. At Naples King Alfonso sat like a statue on his throne all the time Manetti was speaking Yet he was a speaker of no originality. His orations—of a false and inflated style—are mere medleys of facts, collections of Latin phrases, which was exactly what pleased best in those days, and gave free scope for the display of his vast reading, powerful memory, and prodigious facility for stringing together sonorous periods. He was the author of many histories and biographies, which had neither the vivacity of the old chroniclers, nor even the merits of Aretino and Bracciolini. His treatises on philosophy are empty dissertations; his numerous translations from the Greek and Latin are inferior to those of his predecessor Aretino. His versions of the Psalter from the Hebrew and of the New Testament from the Greek prove his dissatisfaction with the Vulgate, but do not support the theory of those who tried to attribute to him a religious daring of which he was incapable. The last years of his life were embittered by the envy that drove him from Florence; but he found protection at Rome and Naples, and died in the latter city, where he was a pensioner of Alfonso of Aragon, on the 26th October, 1459.

Although Manetti's great reputation has not survived, he merits an important place in the history of the fifteenth century,

[1] Vespasiano, "Vita di G. Manetti," sec. xv.

learned trio was Lorenzo Valla, whom we have seen among the Papal secretaries and translators, but who had previously led a very adventurous life. Of a Piacenza family, but born in Rome (1406), he boasted of his Roman birth. Up to the age of twenty-four he remained in Rome, where he was the pupil of Leonardo Bruni, and also, it would seem, of Giovanni Aurispa.[1] He then went as professor to Pavia, where his restlessness of character and originality of mind soon made him conspicuous. In that great centre of legal studies, he fiercely attacked the doctrine of the celebrated Bartolo, on account of his barbarous and scholastic style. How, said he, could Bartolo, who was ignorant of the classic language of antiquity, in which Roman jurisprudence was and ought still to be written, and even ignorant of history, either understand the real significance of Roman law, or properly comment upon it. This audacity was considered rank heresy, and made so much noise among the law students, that poor Valla had to fly from Pavia and go to teach in other cities.[2]

Yet, it was amid these agitations that he brought out his first work, "De Voluptate et Vero Bono,"[3] in which we find manifestations of original thought, and perceive that learning had already given birth to the new spirit of the Renaissance. Comparing the doctrines of the Stoics with those of the Epicureans, Valla exalts the triumph of the senses, and protests against all mortification of the flesh. Life's objects, he says frankly, are pleasure and happiness, and these we ought to pursue according to nature's command. Virtue itself, being derived from the will, not from the intellect, is a means for attaining beatitude, namely, true happiness, which is ever incomplete on this earth. It is impossible to explain all things by reason; the dogmas of religion often remain a mystery, and philosophy only seeks, as far as may be, to expound them rationally; it is not even possible to conciliate free will with divine prescience. Science is founded on reason,—which is in harmony with the reality of things, on nature,—which is God. Truth manifests itself in a true, precise, simple form; logic and rhetoric are almost one and the same thing; a confused and incorrect style is a sign of badly under-

[1] The former was then a member of the Curia; but of the latter, who is supposed to have instructed Valla in Greek, it is not certain that he came to Rome before 1440. It is difficult, therefore, to determine the dates. *Vide* Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Italiana," vol. vi. p. 1029 and fol.

[2] Poggio and Fazio even accuse him of having given a false bond, and attribute to that his flight. They were, however, his enemies, and not, therefore, credible witnesses against him.

[3] It is divided into three parts. *Vide* the edition of Valla's "Opere," published at Basle, 1543.

strength in itself to promote an extraordinary intellectual advance, and avoid the total moral destruction, to which perhaps another nation might have succumbed under similar conditions.

3. Learned Men in Rome.

After Florence, Rome is certainly the city of highest standing in letters. From the days of Petrarch, the Popes began to feel the need of having their Briefs composed by men of learning. And during the Pontificate of Martin, the learned members of the Curia already asserted the right of taking precedence at all public ceremonies over the consistorial advocates, of whom they spoke with much contempt.[1] P. Bracciolini was then the principal personage among them, and with him were others of lesser fame, such as Antonio Lusco, a writer of rhymed epistles and epigrams, who had extracted the rules of rhetoric from Cicero's orations, and composed a formulary for transacting the business of the Curia in classical language.[2] But while in Florence men of learning enjoyed an important social standing and great independence, in Rome they merely formed a small clique, and were subordinate *employés* who, though generally well remunerated, could only aspire to the condition of favoured courtiers. Still they daily increased in number, obtaining posts in the *Abbreviatura*, where there were as many as a hundred writers of Briefs, or in the Pope's private secretary's office, where the clerical dress had to be assumed without the obligation of taking orders. The post of *Abbreviatore* or Brief writer was a permanent one; that of secretary generally lasted only for the Pope's lifetime, but as besides many perquisites, it implied hopes of possible favour and promotion: with these offices it fetched a high price (everything could be bought in Rome), although the first was the more sought after and the dearer of the two.[3]

The golden age for men of letters in Rome was the reign of Nicholas V., who, had it been possible, would have collected, within the walls of the Eternal City, all the manuscripts in the world, all the men of learning and all the monuments of Florence. The savings he made, and the sums received at the jubilee in 1450, gave him the means to set to work upon his project.

[1] Voigt, "Die Wiederbelebung," &c., p. 279, note 3.

[2] "Scripsit item exempla quædam et veluti formulas, quibus Romana Curia in scribendo uteretur, quæ etiam ab eruditissimis viris in usum recepta sunt" (Facius, "De Viris illustribus," p. 3).

[3] Voigt, "Enea Silvio dei Piccolomini, als Papst Pius der Zweite," vol. iii. p. 548 fol.

that city, and once more take refuge in Naples, because of the persecution that threatened him on account of his as then unpublished work, "De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione."[1] Valla maintained that the donation of Constantine was never made, could not be made, and that the original of the pretended document had never been seen. Then by a critical examination of the terms of the document, he proved its falsity. After this he fiercely attacked the simony of the clergy, openly declaring that the Pope had no right to govern either the world or Rome; that the temporal power had ruined the Church, and deprived the Roman people of liberty. He even invited them to rise against the tyranny of Eugene IV., and against all Popes, who from shepherds had become robbers and wolves. "Even were the donation authentic," he said, in conclusion, "it would be null and void, for Constantine could have no power to make it, and in any case the crimes of the Papacy would have already annulled it." He hoped to live long enough to see the popes constrained to be mere pastors, with only spiritual power. It is true that already during the Council of Basle, Cusano and Piccolomini had maintained the falsity of the donation by means of arguments which are also found in Valla.[2] But to him we owe the thorough demolition of the false document, accomplished by pungent criticism, and with all the impetus of his Ciceronian eloquence. Besides, he did not confine himself to a literary and theoretical examination, but sought to totally overthrow the temporal power, by threatening to excite the population to revolt against the reigning pontiff. It was no longer a matter of a simple theological or historical dispute, but this was the first time that an already celebrated scholar, after having exhausted the critical view of the case, rendered it popular, and gave it a practical application.[3]

At that time Alfonso of Aragon was at war with Eugene IV., and Valla, in taking up the cause of his protector, was able to give full vent to his eloquence. Attacked by priests and friars, he, safe in his vantage ground, returned to the charge in other writings. In these he maintained that the letter of Abgarus to Jesus Christ, published by Eusebius, was false; that it was false that the Creed had been composed by the apostles, that in reality

[1] See his "Opera."

[2] Voigt, "Enea Silvio di Piccolomini, als Pabst Pius der Zweite," vol. ii. p. 313; "Die Wiederbelebung," &c., p. 221. See also an article by Professor Ferri on Cusano in the "Nuova Antologia," year 7, vol. xx., May, 1872, p. 109, and fol.

[3] "Lorenzo Valla, ein Vortrag," von Z. Vahlen. Berlin, F. Vahlen, 1870, p. 26, and fol.

stood truths, of a false or incomplete science.—And for these reasons Valla fiercely attacked scholastic philosophy, Aristotle, and Boetius, continually appealing from authority to the healthy use of reason, to reality, to nature, which he exalted in a thousand ways. This need of reality, this redemption of the senses, and of nature, forms the new spirit that animates the whole book, constitutes the special characteristic of Valla's writings, is, in short, the actual spirit of the Renaissance of which he was the incarnation. There is here no question of a new system of philosophy; but one sees the triumph of nature and of good sense, and the independence of reason presents itself to us as a logical consequence of the revival of antiquity.

This work would have been much more successful if Valla, in his restless, quarrelsome spirit, and frequent love of paradox, had not allowed himself to be too much carried away by his own pen. In taking up the defence of the senses, he declares that virginity is in opposition to nature, and makes Panormita declare, that if nature's laws are to be respected, courtesans are of more use than nuns to the human race. In expounding and defending the Epicurean doctrines against the Stoics, in condemning and despising everything that implies contempt of the world, he lets slip many expressions contrary to the letter and spirit of Catholic doctrines. And while protesting his intention of respecting the authority of the Church, his attacks against the clergy were exceedingly violent, and far more formidable than those of Poggio and other learned men. Sarcasm was their principal weapon; that of Valla criticism, which had a far deadlier effect. Therefore he had many bitter enemies, and was soon accused of being a heretic, an epicurean, and a blasphemer of everything that was sacred. Nor was his assertion that for him divine beatitude consisted in true pleasure, true happiness, considered a valid defence, for the most insolent and daring phrases in his own work were cast in his teeth, and the most immoral actions of his life—which was certainly open to attack—were brought up against him.

After teaching in various cities, Valla is found at the Court of Alfonso of Aragon, between the years 1435 and 1442, was appointed his secretary in 1437, and accompanied him in the military enterprises which afterwards established that prince on the Neapolitan throne.[1] In '43 he was in Rome, but had to fly

[1] He says of this period: "Tot praelia vidi, in quibus de salute quoque mea agebatur." "Opera," Basle edition, 1543, p 273. The learned men, however, were fond of boasting of the perils they encountered, whenever they accompanied a prince on any warlike expedition.

Amid so many battles and so much literary activity, enjoying the protection of so magnificent a monarch as Alfonso, and resident in a city that had always shown a singular aptitude for philosophical studies, Valla might have been content. Yet he always yearned for Rome, since that was the great literary centre, and his present position was far from secure. The king might be reconciled with the Pope, might be succeeded by his son, and all things be suddenly changed. In fact, before long the Aragonese were once more in agreement with the Holy See, and Valla had to take care of himself. With the lightness that was special to the learned men, he then decided to retract all the perilous doctrines which he had hitherto maintained, especially those touching the donation of Constantine, which, in the judgment of his adversaries, were all the more dangerous, the less they were talked of. He began by writing letters to several Cardinals, stating that he had been moved by no hatred for the Papacy, but by love of truth, religion, and glory. If his work was of man, it would fall of itself, if of God, no one could overthrow it. Furthermore—and this was the most important point—if it were true that with a pamphlet he had wrought great harm to the Church, they ought to recognize that he was able to work it equal good. But all this did not suffice to pacify Eugene IV., and Valla, who went to Rome in 1445, soon returned to Naples, whence he wrote an apology addressed to the Pope, to whom he promised a complete retractation.[1] In this he repelled the accusations of heresy, brought against him by the malice of his enemies, and ended by saying. "If I sinned not, restore my good fame to its pristine purity; if I sinned, pardon me."

But not even this submission obtained the wished-for result. Only on the election of Nicholas V. (1447), Valla was immediately sent for and employed in making translations from the Greek, of which he had no great knowledge. There in Rome, he spent his days amid lessons, translations, and literary quarrels with Trape-

superiority attributed by Valla to "*Rhetoric*" over "Dialectics": "Noch viel reicher is die Redekunst, welche ein unerschöpfliches Gedächtniss, Kenntniss der Sachen und der Menschen voraussetz, alle *Arten der Schlusse* gebraucht, nicht allein in ihrer einfachen Natur, wie sie die Dialektik lehrt, sondern in den mannigfaltigsten Anwendungen auf die verschiedensten Verhältnisse der öffentlichen Geschäfte nach der Lage der Sachen, nach der Verschiedenheit der Hörenden abgeändert. Dieser reichen Wissen*schaft solle* die philosophische Dialektik dienen ('Dial.,' diop. II, praefatio). *Das* meint Valla, wenn er die Philosophie unter der Oberbefehl der Rede *stellen will*." This is the idea he expounds in the "Dialectica," but in the "Eleganze" *he goes still* farther, and seeks to discover philosophy and logic in language.

[1] "Ut si quid retractatione opus est, et quasi ablutione, en tibi me nudum

it was the work of the Nicene Council. Even before this he had already discovered many errors in the Vulgate, and collected them in a book of annotations, which Erasmus of Rotterdam afterwards republished with an eulogistic letter of defence.[1] These writings and these disputes procured him a summons before the Inquisition in Naples, but, assured of the king's support, he defended himself partly by satires, and partly by declaring that he respected the dogmas of the Church, which had nothing to do with history, philosophy, or philology. As to the donation of Constantine, nothing was said about it, in order not to re-open so thorny a question.

Freed from this danger, he continued his lessons at the university, and prosecuted literary disputes with Bartolommeo Fazio and Antonia Panormita, against whom he wrote four books of invectives.[2] But besides these works he published others, historical, philosophical, and philological, always dictated by the same critical and independent spirit, and of these the "Elegantiæ" and the "Dialectica" are the most noteworthy. The first[3] speedily achieved great popularity, for in its pages Valla displayed his mastery of classical Latin, which he wrote with as much elegance as vigour. He also showed a—for those times—very profound knowledge of grammatical theory, and, what is more surprising, slipped insensibly from philological to philosophical questions. Language, he said, was formed in accordance with the laws of thought, and for this reason grammar and rhetoric were based upon dialectics of which they are the complement and the application. Erasmus also occupied himself with this work, and prepared and published an abbreviation of it.[4] In this, as well as in the "De Voluptate et Vero Bono," we see all the author's originality and the movement of learning towards criticism and philosophy. His "Dialectica," an exclusively philosophical work, is of very inferior merit; but this, too, strikes the same chord, namely, that the true study of thought must be prosecuted by study of language.[5]

[1] *In Novum Testamentum e diversorum utriusque linguæ codicum collatione annotationes*, &c, in Valla's "Opera."

[2] "In Bartholomeum Facium ligurem, Invectivarum sive Recriminationum, libri iv." The cause of this dispute was a criticism by Fazio on Valla's "Life of the Father of King Alfonso."—L. Vallae, "Historiarum Ferdinandi regis Aragonia, libri iii." Parisiis per Robertum Stephanum. In replying to Fazio, Valla also attacked Panormita.

[3] "Elegantiarum, libri vi," in Valla's "Opere."

[4] "Paraphrasis, seu potius Epitome in Elegantiarum libros Laur. Vallae." Parisiis, 1548.—"Paraphrasis luculenta et brevis in Elegantias Vallae." Venetus, 1535.

[5] Ritter, "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie," part 1, p 252, notes in fact the

it is still more worthy of notice that antiquity by no means makes him forgetful of Christian times: "I am not," he says, "of those who forget the Rome of St. Peter for the Rome of the Consuls." Thus his learning gained a wider and deeper basis, for it comprised the Middle Ages and his own time. His second work was the "Italia Illustrata," written at the instance of Alfonso of Aragon, and dedicated to Nicholas V. In this he gave a description of ancient Italy, defined its different regions and enumerating its principal cities, investigated their monuments, their ancient and modern history, and their celebrated men. His third work, dedicated to Pius II, was "Roma Triumphans," in which he undertook to examine the constitution, customs, and religion of the ancient Romans, thus making the first manual of antiquity. Finally, not to mention his book "De Origine et Gestis Venetorum;" he wrote a history of the decline of the Roman Empire, "Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum," &c, a work of vast bulk, of which, however, we have only the three first decades and the beginning of the fourth. The author's intention was to bring it down to his own times; but even in its unfinished state, it is the first universal history of the Middle Ages worthy of the name And Biondo has an admirable method of seeking out the fountain heads and distinguishing contemporaneous from posterior or anterior narrators, by carefully comparing them with each other. It was first in this work that history began to be a science, and historic criticism came into existence. We shall have occasion to refer to it again, when the moment comes for observing that Machiavelli made great use of it in the famous first book of his "Istorie," sometimes translating literally from it. And even Pius II. recognized the great importance of the work, by making a compendium of it in order to give it a classic mould. He also made frequent use of other of Biondo's works, while leaving the author to pass his last days in poverty and almost unknown (1463).[1]

The third learned man whom it is requisite to mention is Enea Silvio dei Piccolomini, the same who succeeded Nicholas V. as Pius II. (1458–64). We have already had a glimpse of him at the Council of Basle, where he supported the election of the Anti-Pope Felix V., to whom he was secretary; later, we saw him in the Imperial Chancery, where he remained many years and

[1] Voigt, "Die Wiederbelebung." &c.; Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. vii p. 577 (2nd edition); Tiraboschi, "S. L I," vol. vi. p. 635 and fol. The "Roma Instaurata" and "Italia Illustrata" were printed for the first time "Romæ in domo nob, *v.* Johannis de Lignamine, 1474," and reprinted with all Biondo's other works at Basle in 1559. They were afterwards translated into Italian.

zunzio and Poggio, without at all concerning himself with religious questions. He was secretary to the Curia and even Canon of St. John Lateran, which was afterwards the burial-place of this pretended religious innovator, who had been a man of little principle, of immoral habits, and of very great literary, critical, and philosophical talent. He ceased to live on the 1st of August, 1457.[1]

At this time there was another scholar of great ability in Rome, and this was Flavio Biondo, or Biondo Flavio, as some call him; born at Forlì in 1388; he was secretary to Eugene IV., Nicholas V., Calixtus III., and Pius II., was used by all and neglected by all to such an extent that from time to time he attempted to better his fortune elsewhere. Yet he had served Eugene IV. through good and evil fortune with unshaken fidelity, and had dedicated some of his principal works to him; he had done the same to Nicholas V., the Mæcenas of all learned men, and to Pius II., who made use of his works, and even epitomized one of them, to give it the elegance of style that it lacked. This in fact was Biondo's great defect, and that helped to keep him almost unknown amongst the Humanists, many of whom were not worthy of comparison with him. He did not know Greek, was not an elegant Latinist, was neither a flatterer, nor a writer of invectives; he had but one dispute with Bruni, and that was wholly literary and scientific, on the origin of the Italian language, and was free from personalities. His epistles contain neither *bon môts* nor elegant phrases, therefore they were never collected, and no one wrote his biography. Yet his was one of the purest characters and noblest minds of that century, and his works have a keenness of historic criticism to be found in none of his contemporaries.

Biondo's first work, dedicated to Eugene IV., and entitled "Roma Instaurata," is a description of Pagan and Christian Rome and its monuments. It is the first serious attempt we have of a complete topography of the Eternal City; the author opens the way towards a scientific restoration of the monuments, and refers to classic authors with singular critical power. Also,

offero" "Ad Eugenium IV., Pont. Apologia: Vallae Opp." The letters to Cardinals Scarampo and Landriani are to be found in the "Epistolæ Regum et Principum," Argentinæ per Lazar. Zetzenerum A. 1595, pp. 336 and 341.

[1] Tiraboschi, "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p. 1029 and fol.; Voigt, "Die Wiederbelebung," &c., p 294 and fol; Voigt, "Pius II, und seine Zeit," vol. i. p. 237; Zumpt, "Leben und Verdienste des L. Valla," in vol. iv. of "Zeitschrift fur Geschichtswissenschaft," von A. Schmidt; Ritter, "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie," part 1. Invernizzi, "Il Risorgimento" (fifteenth and sixteenth centuries), chap. iii.; this work forms part of the "Storia d'Italia" in course of publication at Milan: Vallardi and Co.

tific treatises, and their most attractive parts are always his descriptions of scenery and manners. Thus when writing "De curialium miseriis,"[1] the best part of his book is that in which he relates the unhappy life which he himself led with the subordinates of the Imperial Chancery; their travels, their life in common, the badness of the inns, the vile cookery, the absence of quiet.[2] In other works of his we find descriptions of the countries through which he had travelled, of natural scenery, customs, institutions. These things in short are those that he saw most clearly and describes to us most graphically. Although no traveller in search of unknown regions, nature is ever fresh, ever admirable to him; he can always hear its voice. Even after he was Pope, and was old and infirm, he would have himself carried over the hills and valleys to Tivoli, Albano, and Tusculo, to enjoy the beauty of the scenery, which he so graphically describes in his "Commentarii," that to this day they would make a good guide for visitors to those places. The character and the variety of the vegetation, the mountain and river systems, the philological derivation of their names, the different local customs; nothing escapes him; everything is harmoniously arranged. He also wrote descriptions of Genoa, Basle, London, and Scotland, noting the extent of the latter country, its climate, customs, food, manner of living, construction of the houses, and the political opinions of the inhabitants. There is a description by him of Vienna which is so vivid that to this day fragments of it are given in the most recent guides to that city.[3] Its extent, the number of its inhabitants, the life led by its professors and students, its political and administrative constitution, its mode of life and street scandals, the condition of the nobles and burgesses, its justice, its police, everything seems to bear the same stamp as the Vienna of to-day.[4] He does not write as a learned man; he is a simple traveller impelled by his own curiosity to observe and describe all that he sees. Piccolomini is a man of his time, his qualities are in the very atmosphere he breathes, and his want of individual originality makes him show them all the plainer. He lived, it is true, in the age of the men of learning, but that was also the age which gave birth to Christopher Columbus and moulded his genius.

It is for these reasons that Piccolomini's historical and geographical writings were his most important works, and that their

[1] It is a treatise, in the form of a letter, to Giovanni Aich, dated 30th November, 1444.

[2] "Opera." Basle: Hupper, 1551, vol. i. pp. 91–93.

[3] "Wiener Baedeker, Führer durch Wien und Umgebungen," von. B. Bucher und K. Weiss. Zweite Auflage: Wien, Facsy und Frich, 1870, pp. 43, 44.

[4] "Epist." 165, Basle edition, 1571.

changed his opinions, becoming a supporter of the Papal authority in opposition to the ideas of the Council, which he had previously upheld. In his youth he had given free play to his natural frivolity and versatility of talent, and had written verses, comedies, coarse tales, and letters, in which he spoke with sarcastic cynicism of the dissolute life that he led. As a scholar he was wanting in knowledge of Greek and the Grecian authors, of whom he had only read a few translations sent to him from Italy; of the Latin authors, however, especially Cicero, he had made very prolonged study; he aimed at ease and simplicity of style, and Poggio Bracciolini was his *beau ideal*. His writings had a spontaneous dash, chiefly resulting from the practical nature of his intellect, from his knowledge of mankind, and of the world. He differed from all the other learned men in this, that in his writings he always tried to go straight to the practical and real point, without indulging in too many classic reminiscences. Even in his obscene works, instead of trying effects of style and citing examples from the ancients, he narrated real facts from his own life or that of his friends. His "Orations in Council" were certainly no specimens of great eloquence, but they had a clear intention, and sought to reach a definite end. In the "Epistole" he either treated of affairs or described the places he lived in; and thus we often find the poor secretary of the Imperial Chancery in despair at being among Germans who drink beer from morning to night. The students (as now) swallowed enormous quantities of it; a father awakened his children in the night in order to make them drink wine.

But meanwhile Piccolomini was certainly the first to propagate Italian humanism in Germany, and for many years his letters formed the connecting link between the two countries, and hence have much historical importance. Piccolomini had neither the weight of an independent thinker, the erudition of a true Humanist, nor the patience of the collector; but in him the vivacity, readiness, and spontaneity of the man of letters, who is at the same time a man of the world, reached so high a pitch that he may justly be called an original writer. He was no philosopher; indeed, in this respect he was so imbued with antiquity as to wish to confound the Greek and Roman with the Christian philosophy. In such matters he was out of his real element; this is plainly seen when he turns to subjects relating to philosophy, but of more practical tendency, as, for instance, education. Then he makes few quotations from Aristotle and Plato, but notes instead observations derived from his own experience. He never succeeded in composing any really scien-

of the author's intellectual qualities, and show the many and versatile merits which are scattered through his other works In this, we see him in his varied aspects, as the scholar, the poet, the describer of foreign countries, the enthusiast for nature, the *genre* painter, and the mind imbued with a spirit of thoroughly modern realism.[1] Here are those descriptions of the Roman Campagna, Tivoli, the valley of the Anio, Ostia, Monte Amiata, the Alban Hills, which may still serve as travellers' guides, and almost make you feel the rush of mountain breezes; here, too, if with little order, is the image of a whole century, faithfully reflected in the mind of the writer, who just because he lacks individual character and personality, never gives a subjective tint to the things and men he describes These "Commentaries" extend from the year 1405 to 1463, and were carried on by another hand down to 1464.[2]

All that we have related of Valla, Biondo, and Piccolomini will clearly show that, although the learned men of Rome had neither the importance nor special character of those of Florence, still the Eternal City was always a great centre, to which the learned thronged from all parts of Italy, and soon from all parts of Europe. After the death of the three scholars mentioned above, we find flourishing there Pomponio Leto, Platina, and the Roman Academy. The first of these was better known for eccentricity than for talent, and was generally believed to be a natural son of Prince Sanseverino of Salerno. A pupil of Valla, whom he succeeded as teacher, he left his family in order to come to Rome; and it is said that when they summoned him home, he replied with his celebrated letter—"*Pomponius Lætus cognatis et propinquis suis salutem. Quod petitis, fieri non potest. Valete.*" Inflamed with an enthusiastic ardour for Roman antiquity, he led the life of a hermit, cultivating a vineyard he possessed, according to the precepts of Varro and Columella; going before daybreak to the University, where an immense audience awaited him; reading the classics, and passing long hours in contemplation of the monuments of old Rome, which often moved him to tears. He arranged representations of the comedies of Plautus and Terence, and became the head of a large group of learned men,

[1] Paolo Cortese says. "In eo primum apparuit sæculi mutati signum" ("De Cardinalatu," p 39, edition of 1510).

[2] The "Commentarii" were revised and partly retouched by Giannantonio Campano, Bishop of Teramo. Giovanni Gobellino (Gobel or Gobel) continued them from April '63 to April '64. See Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. vii p. 599, and fol. (second edition). Voigt has given a complete biography of this Pope in his work, "Enea Silvio dei Piccolomini als Papst Pius der Zweite und Seine Zeitalter." Berlin: G. Meyner, 1856-63, in 3 vols. See vol i. chap. 12 *e passim*, vol ii. book iii. chap. 6-11.

principal merit lies in the author's descriptions of things and men actually seen by him, and when History, Geography, and Ethnography presented themselves to him as one science. He had only a fragmentary knowledge of Greek and Roman history; he treated but slightly of that of the Middle Ages, taking much from Biondo and others. Still he examined the writers of whom he made use, the epoch, value, and credibility of their works, for criticism ran in the blood of the men of that time. But he never arrived at any true scientific severity or method; he strung together his information in a confused way, from memory and from memoranda in which he had noted down what he saw, read, or heard. This mode of composition, joined to the mobility and mutability of his character, made him at different times express very different judgments upon the same subject; for he always wrote under the impression of the moment. This, however, increases the spontaneity of his writings, and allows us to read in the mutability of his opinions the history of his mind.

He long meditated a species of "Cosmos," in which he intended to write of the geography of all then known countries, and their history from the beginning of the century to his own day. His "Europa" is a fragment of this colossal work, that was never completed, and in it he makes geography the substratum of history. He treated of the different nations without order, without proportion, often writing from memory, according to his custom. Later, he wrote the geography of Asia, making use of the traditions of the Grecian geographers, and of the travels of Conti, the Venetian, who had been twenty-five years in Persia, and of which Poggio's works contained a very minute narrative, taken from the traveller's own lips.[1] Piccolomini's last and most important work is the autobiography, written when he was already Pope, and which, in imitation of Julius Cæsar, he styles his "Commentaries." These he was accustomed to dictate in intervals of leisure; they are therefore made up of fragments loosely strung together, but perhaps for that very reason give a just idea

[1] Poggii, "De varietate fortunæ," Parisiis, 1723. This work begins with a long introduction, in which the author speaks of the ruined condition of the monuments of Rome. The first book describes the ruins, and then goes on to narrate the deeds of Tamerlane, and the misfortunes of Bajazet. In the second book, Antonio Lusco speaks of the vicissitudes of Europe, from 1377 to the death of Martin V. The third contains a compendium of the history of Italy under Eugene IV. The fourth, which is like a separate work, and has been frequently translated, contains an account of India and Persia, which Poggio derived from Conti, who had been beyond the Ganges. It is certainly one of the most important works Poggio has left, and in it one finds a little of everything; philosophy, descriptions of Italian policy in the fifteenth century, Eastern travels, &c.

Paul II. as the most cruel of tyrants, whose delight it was to torment and torture the learned in the castle of St. Angelo, or which he had made a true tower of Phalaris. As Platina's biographies achieved great popularity, Paul II. descended to posterity as a monster, and the scholar attained his end. The book's principal merit, and the cause of its success, lay in the style, the author's historic criticism being poor enough. Yet he attempted a most difficult undertaking, for which, in these days, the powers of no one man, however learned and gifted, would suffice, and he was the first to succeed in extracting from the fabulous chronicles of the Middle Ages, a manual of history of great clearness, comprising many specimens of the learned biography of the fifteenth century, the which are pleasant reading, because the author sincerely sought for historic truth, if he did not always succeed in finding it As he approached his own times, the value and importance of his biographies increase, always excepting when he is blinded by passion. His remaining historical works have less merit. He died in the year 1481 at the age of sixty-one[1]

As we have already noted, Rome was the resort, not only of Italians, but also of foreigners, particularly Germans, and among these latter are three youths deserving special mention. Conrad Schweinheim, Arnold Pannartz, and Ulrich Hahn, came from the workshops of Faust and Schoffer, and were the men who introduced the art of printing into Italy about the year 1464. They had to fight against starvation, and overcome immense difficulties, for in Italy so great was the passion for ancient manuscripts, that many—among others the Duke of Urbino—preferred written to printed volumes Yet the new industry rapidly spread, and before the year 1490 printing presses were already at work in more than thirty of our cities In 1469 the famous Cardinal Niccola di Cusa, also called the Cusano, died, and was buried in St Piero in Vincoli: he was the son of a fisherman of the Moselle, had studied at Padua, and became one of the most illustrious thinkers of the age. He preceded Piccolomini and Valla in doubting the authenticity of the donation of Constantine, but he did not combat the temporal power of the Holy See He afterwards somewhat modified his opinions, and was raised to the cardinalate, always, however, preserving great integrity of character. Opposed to the authority of Aristotle, he had a philosophic intellect of very great originality; a pantheist and the true precursor of Giordano Bruno, he was a deep thinker as well as

[1] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol vii p 603, and fol. (second edition). Tiraboschi, "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p 317, and fol.

whom he gathered into the Roman Academy, of which he was the founder. Every member of this Academy was rebaptized with a Pagan name, and on the recurrence of the Roman *fasti*, especially on the anniversary of the foundation of Rome, they all met at a dinner, during which compositions in verse and prose were read aloud.[1] At these meetings republics and paganism were discussed; and it was here that Platina, and many other learned men, whom Paul II. had dismissed from the secretaries office, came to vent their rage against the Pope. He was an energetic and impatient man and soon dissolved this academy; many of its members were imprisoned, a few even put to torture, others sought safety in flight (1468). Pomponio Leto was in Venice, and was sent back to Rome, where he saved himself by making his submission and asking pardon.[2] He was thus enabled to reopen his academy under Sixtus IV., and it lasted until the sack of Rome in 1527. He died in 1498 at the age of seventy, and was buried with great pomp. He published several editions of the classics, and some works on Roman antiquities; but his chief importance consisted in his teaching, in the Pagan enthusiasm that he had the power of communicating to others, and in his simple and exclusively studious life.

Another member of the Academy, and one of greater ability, was Bartolommeo Sacchi, of Piadena, in the Cremonese territory, surnamed Platina. First imprisoned for protesting against the loss of his office, he was again shut up in St. Angelo, when the Academy was dissolved; being put to torture, he not only yielded, but made a most abject submission to the Pope, promising to obey him in all things, to celebrate him with highest praise,[3] to denounce to him whoever should speak ill of him. And all this he said while nourishing an intense desire for revenge. Freed from prison, and named Vatican librarian by Sixtus IV., with the obligation of collecting documents on the history of the temporal power, he revenged himself in his "Vite dei Papi," by describing

[1] Jovii, "Elogia doctorum virorum," Tiraboschi, "S L. I," vol. vi. pp. 107, 210, 644–49; Burckhardt; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. vii.

[2] "Fateor et me errasse, peccasse et ideo penas mereri. . . . Rursus petor, veniam, ad pedes me Pauli Pont. clementissimi esse credatis, qui solita pietate et misericordia omnibus paicit," &c. So runs the confession, of which Gregorovius could not find the original, but only a copy in the Vatican; "Geschichte der Stadt Rom" (second edition), p. 587, and fol.

[3] "Tibi polliceor, etiam si a praetervolantibus avibus aliquid contra nomen salutemque tuam sit, audiero, id statim literis aut nunciis Sanctitati tuae indicaturum. Celebrabimus et prosa et carmine Pauli nomen, et auream hanc ætatem, quam tuus felicissimus pontificatus efficit." This letter, by Platina, to be found in Vairani, "Monum. Cremonensium," vol. i. p. 30 is quoted by Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. vii. p 588 (second edition).

It was carried to the Capitol, and forthwith a sort of religious pilgrimage began of people coming to admire, describe, and delineate it with pencil and brush. It may perhaps have had a waxen mask, like those found at Cumae and elsewhere; but every one then believed that an ancient beauty must be infinitely superior to any living one. This was the idea and illusion of the age, yet already it began to seem like the echo of a world on the point of change. Harsh reality was preparing new and very bitter experiences; under Innocent VIII. and Alexander VI. all things went to ruin in Italy.

4. Milan and Francesco Filelfo.

The other cities of Italy are of much less importance than Florence and Rome in the history of letters. In Republics such as Genoa and Venice they began to flourish much later than in Tuscany. Naples had been too long in a state bordering upon anarchy, and at Milan there was little to be hoped under the rule of a monster such as Filippo Maria Visconti, a Condottiere such as Francesco Sforza, or of so dissolute and cruel a youth as his son, Galeazzo Maria. Yet such was then the state of the national spirit, that no one could or might keep entirely aloof from studious pursuits; Visconti himself felt the need of reading Dante and Petrarch, and tried to collect a few learned men round him It was, however, difficult to find any one willing to stay long with him Panormita, though by no means a scrupulous man, could not be induced to remain, even by a salary of eight hundred zecchins, and departed to seek his fortunes elsewhere. The only man fitted for that Court was Francesco Filelfo of Tolentino, who there found a secure asylum whence to insult his enemies with impunity, and live by adulation and the traffic of his pen. This man believed himself and was generally believed to be one of the greatest intellects of the age: but on the contrary he was totally wanting in originality, and his acquirements were very confused and open to dispute Having been sent by the Venetian Republic as ambassador to Constantinople, where he married the daughter of his Greek master, Emmanuele Crisolora, he came back to Italy in 1427, at the age of twenty-nine. He brought a good store of manuscripts, spoke and wrote Greek, had a great facility for the composition of Latin verses, and that was quite sufficient in those times to establish his reputation as an extraordinary man His enormous vanity and restless temperament did the rest. Sent for to teach in the Florentine Studio, he speedily wrote to all of his great success; "Even noble matrons," said he,

scholar.[1] In 1461 another foreigner made his first appearance in Rome, Johann Müller, better known as the famous Regiomontanus, a learned Greek scholar of highest eminence in the mathematics and astronomy of the time. Sixtus IV. entrusted him with the improvement of the calendar, and he died at Rome in 1475. In 1482 came Johann Reuchlin, who afterwards caused Argiropulos, then professor in the Roman University, to exclaim that the Grecian Muses passed the Alps in order to emigrate to Germany.[2] There in fact learning had been widely propagated and had already borne fruit. The sun of the new Italian culture, risen high above the horizon, now illumined the whole of Europe; but its light still proceeded from Italy, the ancient cradle of knowledge.

From the death of Paul II. to that of Alexander VI., matters in Rome went from bad to worse, and the Popes had other things to think of than scholars, learning, or the fine arts. However, Sixtus IV. opened the Vatican to the public, and completed many important constructions in the city. Neither, for a long time, did the Roman people lose their admiration for all that was ancient, as an incident that happened during that period serves to show. In April, 1485, a rumour spread that some workmen, digging in the Appian Way, near the tomb of Cecilia Metella, had discovered a Roman sarcophagus, containing the remains of a beautiful and well-formed maiden, according to the epitaph, JULIA FILIA CLAUDI: "whose blond tresses were adorned with many and very rich precious stones, and tied with gold and a ribbon of green silk."[3] The workmen carried off the jewels; but an indescribable enthusiasm reigned throughout the city. It was said that this corpse had the colour and freshness of life, that its eyes and mouth were still open.

[1] Ritter, "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie"; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. vii. p 592 (second edition); Ferri, "Il Card Niccolo di Cusa e la Filosofia della Religione" ("Nuova Antologia," vol. xx., seventh year, May, 1872, p 100 and fol.). In this article the author examines the philosophical system of Cusano: "Its ruling idea," he says, "is the Absolute, conceivable, but incomprehensible in its infinitude; minimum and maximum, beginning and end of all existence; from it arise the contradictions that it brings into harmony. The idea of Cusano is not the identity of thought and being, but is only an image of the absolute truth. The human intellect remains distinct from the divine, but Creation is a development of the world from God, not a Creation *ex nihilo*. The Dialectic of Cusano does not reach like Hegel's to the identity of thought and being, his system is not yet pure Pantheism, for it admits of two orders of existence, the finite and the infinite" Bruno went a step farther upon this road.

[2] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, p 596.

[3] Matarazzo, "Cronaca di Perugia" in the "Archivio Storico," vol. xvi. part ii. p. 180. The MS. has a gap which prevented its editors from seeing the date of the year. See Nantiporto in Muratori's "Scriptores," vol. ii. part 2, col 109; see Infessura in Eccard, "Scriptores," vol. ii. col. 1951; Burckhardt, "Die Renaissance," p 183 (1st edition).

daughter who has no dower, and whose clothes are in tatters; now the muse of Filelfo is silent for want of money, and he supplicates half threateningly, half humbly, that some may be granted to him [1]

On the 18th of June, 1459, precisely while he was engaged on this work, he wrote to Cardinal Bessarion: "Being now free from fever, I can fulfil my duty towards yourself and the Holy Father Pius II, namely, that of writing verses in exchange for coin." [2]

Nor was his conduct different while writing his other work—also unpublished—"The Sforziad," divided into twenty-four cantos, of which only ten are to be found in the libraries. It is an attempt at an epic poem, relating Sforza's enterprises, and starting from the death of Filippo Maria Visconti. In easy verses, sometimes in the Virgilian, but oftener in the Ovidian style, the author lauds to the sky every action of his hero, even the most perfidious. The gods of Olympus, occasionally even St. Ambrose

[1] Rosmini in his "Vita di F. Filelfo" (Milan, Mussi, 1808, 3 vols.), has published some of these verses

Of Francesco Sforza, Filelfo says:

> "Nam quia magnifici data non est copia nummi
> Cogitur hinc uti carmine rancidule
> Quod neque mireris, vocem pretiosa canoram
> Esca dat, et potus excibat ingenium.
> Ingenium spurco suevit languescere vino,
> Humida mugitum reddere rapa solet."
>
> ROSMINI, vol. ii. p 283, doc. vi.

To Gentile Simonetta:

> "Filia nam dotem petit altera et altera vestes
> Filiolique petunt illud et illud item"
>
> Vol. ii. p. 287, doc. vi.

To Bianca Maria Sforza:

> "Blanca, dies natalis adest qui munera pacis
> Adtulit eternæ regibus et populis,
> Dona mihi quæ, Blanca, tuo das debita vati,
> Cui bellum indixit horrida pauperies?
> Fœnore mi pereunt vestes, pereuntque libelli,
> Hinc metuunt Musæ, Phæbus et ipse timet.
>
> . . . .
>
> Non ingratus ero: nam me tua vate per omne
> Cognita venturis gloria tempus erit."
>
> Vol. ii. p. 288, doc. vi.

To Francesco Sforza:

> "Si, Francisce, meis rebus prospexeris unus,
> Unus ero, qui te semper ad astra feram"
>
> Vol. ii. p 290, doc. vi.

[2] C. de Rosmini, "Vita di F. Filelfo," vol ii p 317, doc. xx.

"give way to me in the streets." However, he was soon at war with everybody. He was a bitter enemy of the Medici, and advised the execution of Cosimo, at that time a prisoner in the Palazzo Vecchio;"[1] at last he had to take refuge in Sienna, where he ran the danger of being killed by one whom he believed to be an assassin in the pay of the Medici in that place. And meanwhile in Florence he was tried and condemned as a conspirator against the lives of Cosimo, Carlo Marsuppini, and others.

At Sienna he wrote his obscene "Satire" against Poggio; later we find him at Milan, where he received a stipend of seven hundred zecchins per year, and a house to live in, and wrote in exalted terms of the virtue, and particularly the liberality of his "divine prince," Filippo Maria Visconti, that tyrant almost unrivalled for perfidiousness and cruelty. On the death of Visconti and the proclamation of the Ambrosian Republic at Milan, he lauded the new Conscript Fathers, and then formed part of the deputation that bore the keys of Milan to Francesco Sforza, in whose honour he wrote his great poem, "The Sforziad."

A fertile composer of biographies, satires, and epistles, his eloquence, as Giovio expressed it, resembled a river which overflowed and muddied everything. Yet he looked upon himself as a dispenser of immortality, of fame or infamy, to whom he chose. When he had to write an Italian commentary on Petrarch, he deplored the degradation to which this reduced his epic muse; nevertheless, he was always ready to sell his Latin verses and commendations to the highest bidder, without being troubled with any sense of shame.

His principal works, besides the "Satires," were only two, and have remained unpublished, without much loss to letters. The first, entitled "De Jocis et Seriis," is a collection of epigrams, divided into ten books, each of a thousand verses, according to the author's always artificial rhetoric. Full of jests, and indecent and very prosaic insults, its only object seems to be an exhibition of the author's facility in verse-making, and gaining money by unworthy adulation, or still more unworthy abuse. Now, it is his

[1] One of the Satires he wrote at this time, concluded thus:

> ". . . Vobis res coram publica sese
> Offert in medium, referens stragesque necesque
> Venturas, ubi forte minus pro lege vel æquo
> Supplicium fuerit de sonte nefando;
> Aut etiam officium collatum munere civis
> Namque relegatus, si culpæ nomine mulctam
> Pendent, officiet magnis vos cladibus omnes."
> (Philelphi, *Satiræ* quartæ decadis hecatostica prima.)

and speaking various languages, inordinate vanity and pride, principles, no morality, and no originality.[1]

He was not certainly the only learned man in Milan. before noticed, we find there in the times of Francesco Sfo Cicco Simoneta, a very learned secretary; his brother Giova Court historian, who narrates the Duke's life and deeds from 1 to 1466, in a history that is not without merit, for it descr matters of which the author was an eye-witness; and Guinifo Barsizza, preceptor to the Duke's children Galeazzo Maria Ippolita, who was afterwards celebrated for her Latin discours Battista Sforza, daughter of Alessandro, Lord of Pesaro, Francesco's brother, also famous for her Latin compositio was likewise educated at this Court. Still this does not su to give Milan any real value of its own in the history of learn

5. Learned Men in Naples.

Alfonso of Aragon, besides being a warrior, was also a of no ordinary mind, and knew how to endow his C with a higher importance. He laid aside his national cha teristics with singular facility, and became thoroughly Ital emulating our native princes as a patron of the fine arts, in search for ancient manuscripts, in studying the classics, and surrounding himself with literary men, on whom, according Vespasiano, he spent some twenty thousand ducats annua Titus Livius was his idol, so much so, that it is related Cosimo dei Medici, wishing to gain his friendship, sent hi precious manuscript of that historian's works He wrote to the Venetians to obtain for him from Padua one of Livy's bones, as though it had been a sacred relic. On a march his army one day, Sulmona, the birthplace of Ovid, was poi out to him, whereupon he immediately made a halt, to give

[1] On Filelfo, one can consult, besides his own works, the three vol biography published by Rosmini (who is, however, much too laudatory), many documents, among which are fragments of Filelfo's unpublished wri Mr Shepherd, in his "Vita di P Bracciolini," speaks at length of Filelfo. also Nisard's "Gladiateurs," &c, vol. 1.; Guillaume Favre, "Mélanges d'Hi Littéraire," Tome 1, Genève, 1856; Tiraboschi, Vespasiano, and Voigt in previously quoted works.

[2] In 1465 she became the wife of Alfonso of Aragon, Duke of Calabria.

[3] Afterwards wife of Frederigo, Duke of Urbino

[4] Vespasiano, "Vita d'Alfonso d'Aragona," vi. and xiv. Voigt, " Wiederbelebung," &c, p. 235, says one hundred and twenty thousand du but this is certainly a mistake, perhaps an error of the press.

and other Christian saints, are the real actors in this drama; but they are never more than mere abstractions, and their sole effect is to deprive the hero of the poem of all personality. There is no atom of true poetry in it, and Filelfo was more in the right than he imagined, when declaring that gold was the only muse that gave him inspiration. Whenever he had to bring some fresh personage on to the stage, he immediately began to bargain. Woe to him who did not pay him! And in this way he managed to obtain money, food, horses, clothes, everything. He feigned to be poor and starving, while living in luxury with six servants and six horses. He deplored the misery to which, according to his own account, his immortal muse was reduced; he was ashamed of needing money, but never of begging for it. And all paid court to him, because they stood in fear of his verses. Even Mahomet II. freed Filelfo's mother-in-law and sister-in-law from prison, on the poet's sending him a Greek ode and a letter, in which he said: "I am one of those whose eloquence celebrates illustrious deeds, and confers immortality on those who are by nature mortal, and I have undertaken to narrate your glorious feats, which by the fault of the Latins and the will of God, have given victory to your arms"[1] He maintained the same behaviour in writing the "Satires," of which there were one hundred, divided into ten decades; and each satire containing one hundred verses was called by him a *Hecatostica*.

Filelfo did not consider himself well treated by Rome. It is true that Nicholas V., after hearing him read his "Satires," awarded him a gift of five hundred golden ducats; he was overwhelmed with courtesies, was commissioned to make a translation of Homer, with the offer of a generous stipend, gratuities, a house, and other things besides if he accepted. But having other views he refused all this. After the death of his first, and then of his second wife, he signified that he might be persuaded to settle in Rome, if a Cardinal's hat were bestowed upon him either at once or later. This request being neglected, he took a third wife, and declined every future invitation. But at Sforza's death his fortunes changed; he fell into poverty, and had to supplicate the patronage of the hated Medici, who recalled him to the Florence University. He arrived there at the age of eighty-three, in 1481, with worn-out strength and exhausted means, and died shortly afterwards. Filelfo was an example of what could be done in those days by a man of good memory, great facility for writing

[1] C. de Rosmini, "Vita di F. Filelfo," vol. ii. p. 90, and pp. 305 and 308, doc x.

reproach, his life was without stain.[1] Nevertheless, there was great uproar. Poggio—certainly a man of few scruples—decidedly blamed him; the Minorite friars hurled their thunders on him from the pulpit, and according to Valla, went the length of burning him in effigy. But Guarino Veronese, a very celebrated scholar, an old man of sixty-three, the father of many children, of the purest character, and quite incapable of imitating him, yet defended him energetically, deriding his detractors, who, said he, "are ignorant that life has one scope, poetry another" And such were, in point of fact, the ideas of the age Sigismondo, king of the Romans, crowned Panormita poet laureate in Sienna, and the "Hermaphroditus" created a school: for from that time forward it was considered almost a merit for an Italian scholar to write Latin indecencies.

Alfonso, being quite indifferent to the accusations launched against the poet, and firm in his wish to give refuge to all those who were persecuted by others, always held Panormita in great esteem. So the poet wrote the "Dicta et facta Alphonsi," for which he received a reward of a thousand ducats; afterwards "Alphonsi regis triumphus," and numerous works in the shape of letters, orations, and Latin verses, which prove him to be a facile writer of no especial merit He read aloud, and commented to the king, Livy, Virgil, and Seneca; he was made a noble, and presented with a villa and large sums of money. Bartolommeo Fazio and others were men of even less weight The only really original mind, therefore, at the Court of Naples was Valla, who contributed in no small degree to foster the critical and philosophical spirit for which Neapolitans have a natural aptitude Another eminent man, Giovanni Gioviano Pontano, was also there, but he flourished later, and belongs to a subsequent period in the history of our letters.

6. The Minor Italian States.

On turning our attention to the smaller cities and lesser States of Italy, we shall find society exposed to such continual and violent shocks, and torn by so many bloody crimes, that it is impossible to conceive how arts and letters should ever have flourished at all in them. The petty tyrants were continually exposed to the attacks of their neighbours, or to conspiracies

[1] "Crede velim nostra vitam distare papyro,
Si mea charta procax, mens sine labe mea est."
(Antonii Panormitæ, "Hermaphroditus" Primus in Germania edidit et Apophoreta adjecit F. C. Forbergius · Coburgi, 1824. *Vide* "Epig.," ii 1.)

to exclamations of joy. He effected his state entry into Naples through a breach in the walls, carefully imitating all the ceremonial of a Roman triumph.

Trapezunzio, Valla, Fazio, Beccadelli, and Porcellio dei Pandoni, resided long at his Court, and for a short time Filelfo, Gaza, Manetti, and Piccolomini were also there. All were treated with munificence and kindness. When Fazio had completed his "Historia Alphonsi," the king, who already paid him five hundred ducats a-year, made him a present of fifteen hundred more, saying, "This is not intended as payment for your work, which is above price"[1] When he sent an invitation to Manetti, who was flying from his Florence, he said to him, "With you I will divide my last loaf."

A man of unprejudiced mind, continually at war with the Papacy, he gave shelter and protection to all men of learning, whatever their opinions, and guaranteed them full freedom of speech, defending them against the Inquisition and every other danger. Thus Valla, who was the most important man of learning at the Neapolitan Court, was enabled to inveigh against Popes and priests, and freely expose his religious and philosophical opinions both in his writings and from his professorial chair. This bestowed on the learned society of Naples a distinct physiognomy and special importance. It was the same with Antonio Beccadelli, surnamed the Panormita. Born at Palermo in 1394, he, after studying at Padua, had suddenly achieved a noisy celebrity by writing a book, that excited great scandal by an indecency that was not as yet very usual in learned writings. This work, bearing the title "Hermaphroditus," is a collection of epigrams, that for shameless pungency and indecent flippancy surpasses anything before written in imitation of the Roman satirists. Not only vice in general, but obscenity and viciousness of every description, were the continual subject of his verses, which, possessing some elegance and mastery of many difficult points of style and language, obtained an extensive success. But very fierce attacks were also made upon the author. He, however, was in no wise disconcerted by them, and gloried in his book, because he had written it in imitation of the ancients, and proved that anything and everything could be expressed in Latin. He defended himself by quoting Tibullus, Catullus, Propertius, Juvenal, and even Greek and Roman philosophers and politicians, who, although virtuous men, had written similar obscenities. He added that if his poems were open to the same

[1] Vespasiano, "Vita d'Alfonso," § vii.

he inquired if the excommunicated still continued to enjoy the flavour of good wine and good dinners. On the occasion of some great festival of the Church, he had the holy water pyx filled with ink, in order to enjoy seeing the faithful stain themselves with it unawares.[1] Yet even this coarse tyrant was surrounded by literary men, to some of whom he gave estates, to others assigned salaries; and in his castle, *Arx Sismundea*, they sang the praises of the prince, and extolled his passion for the beautiful Isotta, to whom a monument, *Divae Isottae sacrum*, was erected in the church of St. Francesco beside that of her lover. The church itself, upon which Leon Battista Alberti worked from 1445 to 1450, and one of the most elegant and purest edifices of the Renaissance bears on its façade the name of Sigismund, and the initials S and I. are introduced into the ornaments. In the two outer sides are niches intended for the tombs of the Court soldiers and men of learning. And there was no affectation in all this; it was the expression of a real need of the cultured and artistic side of his character. Pius II, who was at fierce war with him, and burnt him in effigy, wrote that he (Malatesta) "was learned in history; had great knowledge of philosophy, and seemed born for everything that he undertook."[2]

At Ferrara, Mantova, Urbino, the capital cities of small but nevertheless important States, things wore a very different aspect. Without being great centres like Rome and Florence, they had a character and distinct importance of their own in the history of letters. Ferrara was the more celebrated. Its strategical position rendered it independent, since none of the great Italian States could allow another to take possession of it. The Lords of Este, who ruled and fortified it, were men of ability and also often of great military power. Yet the interior of the Ducal Palace witnessed many scenes of bloodshed. Parisina, wife of the bastard Niccolò III., being enamoured of a natural son of her husband, both she and her lover were beheaded (1425). And the same duke had afterwards to consolidate his power, combating the hostile nobility with every stratagem of war and all manner of treachery. This bastard was succeeded by two natural sons, Lionello and Borso In after years Ercole, legitimate son of Niccolò III, seized the dukedom by force of arms from the hands of Lionello's son, and did bloody execution on his enemies And so matters went on even in the sixteenth century, when

[1] G. Voigt, "Enea Silvio dei Piccolomini," &c, vol iii p 123.

[2] Pii II. "Comm," Rome, 1584, lib ii p. 92. Burckhardt, pp. 223, 224, observes that the word *historia* is here used to indicate a knowledge of antiquity,

daily breaking out in their own States. Where a city like Ferrara or Bologna was in question, the strategical position of the former, and the territorial importance of the latter, afforded certain help in their continual vicissitudes. Where two princes were concerned as powerful as Alessandro Sforza of Pesaro,—who had the support of his brother of Milan—or as Federico d'Urbino—who was also a captain of adventurers—with an army at his back, then, even if dangers were unavoidable, it was at least comparatively easy to save the States. But where all such assistance was lacking, we find nothing but bloody chronicles such as those of the Baglioni in Perugia. These never succeeded in establishing an undisputed lordship over the city; they were, it is true, the dominant family, but their chief was not always recognized by its members, and there was a strong adverse party, headed by the Oddi. The town was always filled with armed men and bravos, and violent tumults would break out at a moment's notice.

Towards the end of the fifteenth century, bloody fights within and without Perugia were so frequent and so furious, that the houses in the country round were all knocked to pieces, the fields devastated, the peasants converted into assassins, the citizens enlisted in the free companies; while wolves prowled about feeding on "Christian flesh."[1] Yet it was precisely at this period that the noblest, most ideal and delicate painting of the Umbrian school flourished at Perugia: another of the same strange contrasts then to be observed throughout the length and breadth of Italy.

Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini was another of the petty tyrants, and one of the most remarkable of them. A renowned captain of adventurers, without ever having held the command of large armies, he frequently showed himself a true monster of cruelty. He repudiated his first wife, after receiving her dowry; out of jealousy or revenge he murdered his second and third; but ardently loved his mistress Isotta to the end of his life. Stained by a thousand crimes, he was extremely cynical and irreligious. On his tomb he desired the following inscription to be placed:—

> "Porto le corna ch'ogn'uno le vede,
> E tal le porta che non se lo crede."

He denied God, denied the immortality of the soul, and when the Pope pronounced sentence of excommunication against him,

[1] "Archivio Storico," vol. xvi. parts 1 and 2. The Chronicles of Graziani and Matarazzo.

Cardinal Ippolito d'Este put out the eyes of his brother Giulio, another bastard, because they were praised by a lady whom both loved, and who alleged to the cardinal as the reason why she preferred his brother to himself, the irresistible beauty of the former's eyes. The operation was imperfectly performed, thereby causing fresh tragedies at the unhappy Court, for Giulio, to whom the sight of one eye remained, conspired with Don Ferrante against their common brother, Duke Alfonso I.,[1] husband of Lucrezia Borgia. The cardinal betrayed the plot (1506), and the two brothers were condemned to a perpetual imprisonment, in which Don Ferrante died, and from which Giulio was only liberated on the accession of Alfonso II. (1559).

Yet this was the Court so celebrated for its artistic and literary splendour, even to the days of Bojardo, Ariosto, and Tasso, who shed over it the lustre of their names and of their immortal works. Having been, in the Middle Ages, a Lombard, feudal, and knightly city, it had not shared the great literary movement that showed itself in Florence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. But in the fifteenth century it was one of the most flourishing cities of Italy, and the disorders of the Court seldom seemed to spread beyond the walls of the Ducal Palace. Ferrara had been built after a pre-arranged design, was governed in an orderly way, and exiles from Florence and other Italian cities took refuge there and erected palaces. The houses and streets, which are now so deserted, barely sufficed for the needs of the population. Its dukes looked after everything, and invited learned men to settle in the city. Among these, the first place must be given to Guarino Veronese, who, in bringing learning to Ferrara where feudal and knightly traditions were in full force, promoted the revival of letters that afterwards gave us the "Orlando Inamorato," the "Orlando Furioso," and so many other works of imperishable fame.[2]

Guarino, born in 1370, studied Greek at Constantinople, whence he returned to Italy with a rich store of manuscripts, and so tenderly did he value these, that there was a generally received fable of his hair having suddenly turned white on the loss by shipwreck of a large portion of his treasure.[3] He taught first in Florence, then at Venice, where one of his pupils was Vittorino

[1] The brothers were four: Alfonso I., Cardinal Ippolito, Don Ferrante, and Giulio the bastard, all sons of Ercole I.

[2] Giosuè Carducci, "Delle poesie latine edite ed inedite di Ludovico Ariosto." Bologna, Zanichelli, 1875, p. 21 and fol.

[3] C. de Rosmini, "Vita e disciplina di Guarino Veronese;" Brescia, 1805-6, vol. i. p. 6; Tiraboschi, "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p. 118.

30,000 ducats,[1] and gave employment for fourteen years to thirty or forty copyists in Urbino, Florence, and other places.[2] He had it arranged with the nicest order, following in part the system of Parentucelli,[3] but trying to embrace the whole circle of ancient and modern lore.[4] Thus he succeeded in obtaining something unique in the world. Surrounded by Italian and foreign artists, and also by soldiers, he had few learned men at his Court, but many were in correspondence with him, and dedicated to him their works. He went about unarmed among his people, dined frugally in the open air, listening to readings from Livy or other ancient authors. Towards evening he attended the military and gymnastic exercises performed by his youths and pages in the field of St. Francesco. The people loved their duke, and his successors followed in his footsteps.[5] It would be too much to assert that Urbino gave any extraordinary impulse to literary culture in Italy; but we may say that it was like a shining jewel amid the Apennines; a model city, the birth-place of many great men, the greatest of whom was Raphael.

[1] Professor E. Piccolomini, in his work "Sulla libreria privata dei Medici," before quoted by us, gives, at p. 25, the instructions given to the librarian, which clearly prove the great precision and order exacted by the Duke.

[2] This library, afterwards stolen by Duke Valentino, and later bought by Pope Alexander VIII., is now to be found in the Vatican. Castiglioni, in his "Cortegiano," mentions it briefly, but Vespasiano speaks of it at length, and describes it with ecstasy. "This Duke alone has had a mind to do that which no one has undertaken for more than a thousand years, and to collect a library, the worthiest ever made in all these ages. . . . And he has taken the road that needs must be taken by whomsoever wishes to make a worthy and famous library such as this is . . . What letters! what books! what goodly books! collected without regard for expense." ("Vita di Federico, Duca d'Urbino," sec. xxviii.) . . . "In that library all the books are superlatively beautiful, all written with the pen, and not a single printed one, for the Duke would have taken shame to himself for it; all most elegantly illuminated, and none that is not written upon kid. But its principal merit was the order with which it was arranged, containing the principal ancient and modern authors in every branch of knowledge, and not many specimens of the same author, one copy of each, neither is there a single sheet of their works that is not complete" (Ibidem, sec. xxxi.).

[3] Professor Piccolomini, at p. 111 and fol. of his above-quoted work, gives the bibliographical canon composed by Parentucelli, afterwards Pope Nicholas V., and one can see how incomplete it is, and therefore how exaggerated the praises which it obtained.

[4] Vespasiano, "Vita di Federico, Duca d'Urbino," sec. xxxi.

[5] Ibid., "Vita di Federico, Duca d'Urbino"; Ugolini, "Storia dei Conti e Duchi d'Urbino," two vols.: Firenze, 1859; Dennistoun, "Memoirs of the Dukes of Urbino": London, Longmans and Co., 1851; Burckhardt, "Die Cultur der Renaissance," pp. 44-46; Voigt, "Die Wiederbelebung," &c., p. 263.

And Vittorino's success in so immoral an age, was entirely owing to the nobility and elevation of his mind, and the generosity with which he spent all his salary in pedagogic education of the poor, who thus pursued their studies side by side with the Marquis of Mantua's sons and the young Federico da Montefeltro, afterwards the celebrated Duke of Urbino. And this community and equality in school of all orders of citizens, formed part of Vittorino's giving system, for he was the first to conduct instruction and education upon scientific principles.[1] The excellent results of the *Casa Gioiosa* were plainly visible in Mantua and elsewhere, since for a long time Vittorino's pupils were distinguished by a loyalty of character that was in strong contrast with the general corruption.

It was mainly owing to this system of education that Urbino became the model Court of Italy, and that the Duke Federico was good, loyal, and faithful in spite of being a Condottiere Captain. Universally renowned for his strategy, for the discipline maintained by his soldiers, and for being the only leader of his time who never betrayed his word nor his oath, he was acquainted with Latin, philosophy, and history; he read the classics, and had a pronounced taste for theological controversy. These acquirements, united to those gained in the camp and the council chamber, gave him possession, or at least comprehension, of nearly all the knowledge of his day. His life was ordered with the regularity of a time-piece, and all his leisure moments were devoted to discussion and study. When riding to Tivoli with Pope Pius II, beneath a burning sun, amid the dust raised by the hoofs of the cavalry, the glitter of helmets and swords, he chatted with the Pope on the arms of the ancients, on the Trojan war, and could not quite agree with him on the subject of the confines of Asia Minor.[2] The money earned by the rich pay of a free-captain he spent during peace in beautifying the city and Court of Urbino. It almost seemed as though he wished to make his State a work of art. The palace built by him was one of the most celebrated in Italy, not for its richness, but for its exquisite taste. It housed many hundreds of persons, to each of whom a definite office was entrusted, with a fixed time-table and written instructions. It resembled a great military school, to which many nobles sent their sons, in order that they might be trained in soldierly discipline, and exercises, and in elegance of manners. His greatest treasure was the extensive library, on which he spent

[1] C. de Rosmini, "Idea dell' ottimo precettore nella Vita e disciplina di Vittorino da Feltre e dei suoi discepoli." Bassano, "Remondiniana" Press, 1801.
[2] Pii II, "Comm.," p. 131.

by his writings, by those of his followers, and the positive results of his doctrines, we may safely affirm that he was convinced that Christianity would derive fresh confirmation from the Platonic philosophy, and might therefore be revived under another, and in his opinion, more rational form. In a pamphlet, that became very celebrated,[1] he examined the points of diversity between the Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies, and giving preference, of course, to the former system, reduced everything to a single question. The two great philosophers, said he, admit that nature works, not by chance, but for a given purpose. Aristotle, however, maintains that this purpose is achieved unconsciously *non consulto;* Plato, on the contrary, asserts with more justice that nature is rational, is conscious, *consulto agit,* its art is divine, since it is God Himself who works in it[2] A most burning dispute arose upon this question, which, unimportant as it may seem to us, was of immense consequence at that time For it opened the way to Pantheism; and the conception of the personal God, of the Omnipotent Jehovah of the Jews, of the Father Almighty of the Christians, was here transformed into the conception of the philosophical absolute[3] The Greek and Italian men of learning, though with no clear understanding of what they were doing, still foresaw the great importance of the question at issue, and therefore dwelt upon it with insistency

Giorgio Scolarius and Thedore Gaza, both Greeks and both Aristotelians, fiercely attacked Plethon in the gross language customary to learned men in those days. Cardinal Bessarion, in endeavouring to make peace, allowed it to escape him that he considered Thedore Gaza more learned than Giorgio Trapezuntios, whereupon the latter attacked every one, including Plato

[1] "De Platonicæ atque Aristotelicæ philosophicæ differentia." Basileæ, 1574.

[2] In my "Storia di G. Savonarola," &c., I have gone into this subject more minutely. See vol. 1 book I, chap iv.

[3] "Unser heutiger monotheistischer Gottesbegriff hat zwei seiten, die der Absolutheit und die der Personlichkeit, die zwar in ihm vereinigt sind, doch so, wie bisweilen in einem Menschen zwei Eigenschaften, davon die eine ihm nachweislich von den vaterlichen die andre von den mutterlichen Seite kommt; das eine Moment ist die judisch-christliche, das andre die griechisch philosophische Mitgift unseres Gottesbegriffs Das alte Testament konnen wir sagen hat uns den Herrn-Gott, das neue den Gott-Vater, die griechische Philosophie aber hat uns die Gottheit oder das Absolute vererbt" (Strauss, "Der alte und der neue Glaube," Bonn, 1873, fifth edition, p. 107). The same author observes in the preceding page. "In Alexandria war es, wo der judische Stamm-und Nationalgott mit dem Welt-und Menschheitsgotte zusammenfloss und bald zusammen wuchs den die griechische Philosophie aus der olympischen Gottermenge ihrer Volksreligion heraus entwickelt hatte" (p 106). From Alexandria these ideas came to Italy, spread throughout Europe, and became the bone and substance of modern culture.

7. The Platonic Academy.

The writers hitherto noticed lived, as we have already said, amid a multitude of others, whose names, though famous in their own day, gradually fell into oblivion. No century in fact has contributed to history so great a hecatomb of supposed celebrities as the fifteenth century. And this is easily explained by the double work that age carried on. In its efforts to revive antiquity, it set in motion, on the one hand, an often mechanical imitation and reproduction of the past, in which those who have since been forgotten took part; on the other, new and unexpected results were obtained, which were the work of a much smaller number of scholars, whose names deserve historical mention. And this double order of facts and individuals is to be met with in nearly all the culture of the Renaissance—in philosophy no less than in letters. Philosophy had apparently a great and general importance among the learned; but the greater number of these merely extracted from the ancient writers a dictionary of phrases on glory, friendship, contempt of death, the *summum bonum*, happiness and virtue, which they continually repeated, without conforming to them either their deeds or their convictions. We constantly find in these phrases a strange mixture of Paganism and Christianity, in odd contradiction one with the other; a point which was quite indifferent to the writer. Soon, however, the need was felt of finding some unrevealed but rational basis of human life to explain at once Pagan and Christian virtue, and to harmonize their too apparent contradiction. Then, work that was more or less original began, first started by the Neo-Platonists and the Academy, they had founded in Florence.

The Greek exiles did not contribute much to the diffusion among us of their language (which had already begun to be studied in Italy), and still less to the learning which already flourished before their arrival, but they greatly helped to direct learning itself to the study of the ancient philosophers. The first origin of Platonism, or rather of Neo-Platonism, in Italy, is in fact owed to Giorgio Gemistos, surnamed Plethon, on account of his professed admiration for Plato. Born in the Peloponnesus according to some, only a refugee there from Constantinople according to others, he was the most learned and influential of the many Greeks gathered together at the Council of Florence. And so earnest and enthusiastic was his devotion to Platonism, that he even hoped from it a revival of religion. This caused his detractors to assert that he desired the revival of Paganism; but judging

forest of Camaldoli; others more solemn were held every year in Florence, and in the Medici villa at Careggi on the 7th November, which, according to the Alexandrine tradition, was the anniversary of Plato's birth and death.[1] The custom of solemnly celebrating it, observed down to the times of Plotinus and Porphirius, was, after twelve hundred years, according to Ficino, now resumed.[2] The festival began with a banquet, followed by a philosophical discussion, generally ending with an apotheosis, which was almost a sacred hymn to the great Master. Less solemn meetings and discussions were held on many different occasions, but always in the same easy and friendly manner.

The title of Academy was only taken from the doctrines entertained by its members, since as far as we can ascertain, it had no peculiar statutes or regulations. It was held together by Ficino's teachings and personality, and by the fervour of his friends and disciples.[3] And if, on the one hand, this reduces it to insignificance as an institution, on the other, it increases its historical importance, since it proves it to be a natural and spontaneous outcome of the social conditions which gave it birth. In fact, no sooner were these social and intellectual conditions changed, than it became impossible to keep it alive. It went on very regularly down to 1478; when the bloody conspiracy of the Pazzi having broken out, and persecution commenced, men's minds were disturbed; there was an end to the tranquillity requisite for philosophic contemplation, and the meetings, already sadly thinned, ceased altogether with Ficino's death. Those afterwards held in the Oricellarii Gardens, and at which Machiavelli was often present, had very little to do with Platonism, as is clearly seen by Machiavelli's dialogues, "Delle Arte della Guerra," and by the plots that were hatched there We might almost say that the title of Platonic still given to these meetings was sometimes a mask to hide their real purport The attempts made by Leopoldo dei Medici in the seventeenth century to bring the Academy to life again, belong to another age, have another signification, and are of very slight importance in the history of science[4]

[1] A similar tradition was also current respecting Pythagoras and Apollonius, arising perhaps from the old custom of the primitive Christians, who often styled the day on which martyrs passed to a better life their birthday.

[2] Ficino states this in his Commentary on Plato's "Symposium"

[3] Ficino in his letters divides his Platonists into disciples and friends, saying, that from the latter he often learned much One of them was Poliziano, who wrote to him: "Thou seekest the truth and I seek the beautiful in the writings of the ancients; our works complete each other, being like two halves of one and the same whole"

[4] Respecting these attempts, one may refer to the notices collected by Professor

himself, with greater fury than before. Then Bessarion published a voluminous work, "In Calumniatorem Platonis," in which, while repulsing Trapezuntios' assaults, he tried with an easy and most diffuse Latin eloquence, barren of all literary or philosophical originality, to conciliate all opposing opinions. According to him, Aristotle and Plato both said in substance the same things. This contest waged among the Greeks, had no genuine philosophical importance, and remained where it was left by G. G. Plethon; but it served to attract Italian minds to a branch of erudition, which they had hitherto neglected, their study of the Greek philosophers having been chiefly literary. Meanwhile G. G. Plethon, without wasting time in replying to abuse, succeeded, before returning to his own country, in infusing so much admiration for the Platonic doctrines in Cosimo dei Medici's mind, that he left him decided to use every means for their propagation in Italy, and to re-establish the old academy.

To attain this object, Cosimo's practical common sense, showed him that first of all he must find a suitable man. And such an one he believed that he had found in a young man of Figline, a doctor's son, aged eighteen, who was devoting himself with much ardour to his father's profession. "Thy son," said Cosimo, "is born to minister to minds, not bodies;" and he took him to live in his own palace, intending him to be the future champion of Platonism. This youth was Marsilio Ficino (born 1433), who, setting to work with fervent zeal, produced after five years' study a work on the Platonic philosophy, that was based, however, solely on translations. And from that time to his life's end, Ficino studied nothing but Plato and the Neoplatonists, writing a great number of translations and original tractates, besides giving instruction to the sons and grandsons of Cosimo, and afterwards to a large class in the Florentine Studio.

To describe Ficino's works is to give the history of Platonism in Italy; to narrate his life is to give the history of the Platonic academy. His followers contented themselves with repeating their master's ideas, and the academy was born and died with him. It was in reality a mere assembly of friends and disciples who gathered round him, under the protection of the Medici, for the discussion of Platonic philosophy. It resembled the reunions formerly held in the cell of Marsigli or of Traversari; excepting that the Medici, especially Lorenzo, oftener joined in these, promoted them with more ardour, and the philosophical matters discussed in them had a much louder echo throughout Italy. During the summer some of these meetings were held in the

Ficino's most intimate friend, and many others. Yet among all these, without excepting even Landino and Alberti, not a single true philosopher is to be found; they all repeat the same ideas, and these ideas are Ficino's. It may certainly be remembered that Angelo Poliziano and Lorenzo dei Medici, both intellects of undoubted eminence, were also members of the Platonic Academy; but their writings all show them to be men of letters and not philosophers. Pico della Mirandola only appeared later as a propagator of Ficino's ideas, and neither had he any philosophical originality. But, few or many, of what matters did they speak, what and of what value were these doctrines which found so many and so ardent champions?

And the nearer we approach to them the more does our astonishment increase. In the summer of 1468[1] we find them in the pleasant convent of Camaldoli, whither they had gone to enjoy the country air, and hold the famous Camaldolensian disputes. There were Lorenzo dei Medici, Giuliano dei Medici, Cristoforo Landino and his brother, Alamanno Rinuccini, Leon Battista Alberti—then just come from Rome—and Marsilio Ficino. After hearing mass they went to sit in the shade of the forest trees, and there passed the first day in disputing on the contemplative and the active life. Alberti declared in favour of the former, supporting his preference by very commonplace arguments; while Lorenzo dei Medici held that both kinds of life were equally necessary. On the second day they spoke of the "Summum Bonum," and we have a series of empty phrases and classical quotations. On the third and fourth days Alberti demonstrated his Platonic wisdom by a long commentary upon Virgil, endeavouring by means of the strangest allegories to prove that in the Æneid are to be found concealed the whole Platonic doctrine, and the whole Christian doctrine, which, in his opinion, are at bottom one and the same thing. And these allegories, which moved Angelo Maria Bandini to say in reporting them that the Platonists often seemed to have lost their wits,[2] are exactly what they lay most stress upon, almost as though these formed a substantial part of their philosophy.

We will now glance at the speeches pronounced at one of the

[1] Bandini says that these meetings were held in 1460: but Roscoe observes that Lorenzo dei Medici was only twelve years old at that time, and gives instead the date of 1468. "The Life of Lorenzo dei Medici," &c., chap. II.

[2] "Hoc pronunciare liberi possum, opiniones eorum tenebricosis allegoriarum involucris et dicendi, genere plusquam poetico, qui omnium fere academicorum mos erat, fuisse absconditas." After which he goes on to quote expressions which, as he justly observes, no man of sound mind would think of using.—"Specimen," vol. xi. page 58.

Almost all those who have written on the Platonic Academy and on Ficino have contented themselves with carefully collecting biographical and literary anecdotes, which are things of very secondary value.[1] What chiefly concerns us is to know the intrinsic merit of these doctrines, the reason of their immense popularity in the fifteenth century, and what was the talent of those who discovered and propagated them. Certainly when we consider the numerous group of Platonists collected round Ficino, it astonishes us to find that two only merit some respect as writers of philosophical works. One of these is Cristoforo Landino, the celebrated commentator of Dante and of Petrarch, an Hellenist of good repute, professor at the Studio and author of the "Disputationes Camaldulenses,"[2] in which he gives long and minute reports of the Platonic discussions. The other is Leon Battista Alberti, a first-rate artist, poet, prose writer, scholar, scientist, a universal man, and a precursor of Leonardo da Vinci in the prodigious variety of his intellectual gifts. To these two were added the lesser lights: Donato Acciajoli, Antonio Carrigiani, Naldo Naldi, Peregrino Agli, Alamanno Rinuccini, Giovanni Cavalcanti,

A. Alfani, in his work, "Della Vita a degli Scritti di O. R. Ruccellai," Firenze, Barbera; 1372. This author, however, endeavours to give Ruccellai a philosophic importance, which, in our opinion, he does not possess

[1] We must make one exception in favour of a very brief but learned work by K. Sieveking, "Die Geschichte der Platonischen Akademie zu Florenz," Hamburg, Druck- und Lithographie des Rauhen Hauses zu Horn, 1844. This fine monograph was published without the author's name, as an appendix to a valuable short history of Florence by the same writer. Most of his information regarding the Platonic Academy and Ficino is drawn from Ficino's own works Of the Academy he makes special mention in his Epistles, and the Introduction or Commentary to his version of Plato's "Symposium." Many notices are also to be found in Tiraboschi, in the "Life of M. Ficino," written in Latin by Corsi; and in that of Lorenzo dei Medici, written by Roscoe and by Reumont: in A. M. Bandini's "Specimen Litteraturæ Florentinæ," sec. xv. &c.: Florentia, 1747. This work is chiefly a biography of Cristoforo Landino, a follower of Ficino, and member of the Academy. Many notices too were collected by Leopoldo Galetti, in his "Saggio intorno alta Vita ed agli Scritti di Marsilio Ficino," published in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," new series, tome ix. second issue, and tome x. first issue. For an exposition of Ficino's doctrines, see Ritter's "Geschichte der neuern Philosophie," part 1, book 2, chap xiv, and for the philosophy of those times in general, see also F. Schultze's "Geschichte der Philosophie der Renaissance" (Jena, 1874).

[2] Of a Pratovecchio family, but born in Florence in 1424, learned in Greek and Latin, he was appointed teacher in the Studio in 1427. He was chancellor to the Guelph party; afterwards one of the secretaries of the Republic, an office which he held until 1497. Then on account of his age he retired to Pratovecchio, continuing to enjoy his stipend of one hundred florins per annum until 1504, when he died at the age of eighty, in a villa bestowed upon him by the Republic in recompense for his "Comento su Dante," Tiraboschi, "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p. 1065; Bandini, "Specimen," &c.

essences are at the same time the ideas of Plato and the forms of Aristotle. But not content with this, he further asserts that the third essences, created by the angels, become in their turn identical with the ancient gods; nor is this sufficient, for such a confusion of ideas follows that we can no longer follow the author. Jove is heaven, Saturn and Venus are the two planets thus named; but they are likewise the third essences, or the souls of heaven, and of the two planets; they are the three divinities of the ancients, and also three angels; they are finally the soul of the world, inasmuch as it informs, moves, and generates[1] What is chiefly clear in all this confusion is, that in the opinion of the Academicians, Christianity and Paganism ought to form one and the same thing with Platonism. Allegory is the key-stone of this edifice, or rather artifice, in which things do not mean what they are, but become symbols and emblems of other things, and as all this is arbitrary, so they can be twisted to any signification one chooses to give them.

Aristophanes, one of the speakers in the "Symposium," says that, in the beginning, there were three sexes, male, female, and promiscuous, that is to say, individuals who were men and women, at the same time, with two heads, four hands, &c. These beings tried to struggle against the gods, and were therefore divided into two halves, one of which is always seeking the other, hence it is only when united that lovers can be happy. If mortals, however, persist in their pride, they will be punished by a new division; it will then be curious, adds Aristophanes, to see them going about the world with only half a head, one eye, one hand, one foot. Landino, who had to comment upon this strange discourse, seeks neither the origin of the legend, nor its mythological explanation. The soul, he says, was created whole by God, furnished with divine light with which to look upon the higher things, with natural light, inborn, with which to look upon the lower. But man sinned by pride, wished to make himself equal with God, thinking that his natural, inborn light was sufficient for him; whereupon his thoughts were directed to corporeal things alone, and the original unity was broken. If he persists in his pride, trusting entirely to his natural light, he will be punished anew by losing that also[2] This was the easy explanation of everything.

The last to speak is Cristoforo Marsuppini, who concludes by commenting on the very beautiful speech of Alcibiades, and the words which he, at the end of the "Symposium," addresses to Socrates. The orator makes his commentary by expounding the

[1] See Cavalcanti's two speeches in the "Commentarium."
[2] "Commentarium," Oratio iv

grandest banquets of the Academy, given by order of Lorenzo il Magnifico in the villa at Careggi, under the presidency of Messer Francesco Bandini. Here it is no less a personage than Ficino himself who gives a minute report of the proceedings.[1] The number of the guests was nine, in honour of the nine muses. Francesco Bandini, Antonio Agli, Bishop of Fiesole, Marsilio Ficino and his father, C. Landino, Bernardo Nuzzi, Giovanni Calvacanti, Carlo and Cristoforo Marsuppini. The dinner over, Plato's "Symposium" was read aloud, and the discourses held in the house of Agathon were strangely expounded by the guests at Careggi. Phaedrus says in the "Symposium," that love inspires heroism, was born directly after Chaos, and before the other gods, and is admired by all admirers of beauty. And this is Cavalcanti's commentary upon that passage: God, beginning and end of all the worlds, creates the angels, who in their turn, form the third essences out of the universal soul created by God. These essences are the souls of all things, and therefore also of the different worlds to which they give life, because the body is formed from the soul. When Chaos begins to assume shape, it feels a desire for beauty, which is love; and it is for this reason, according to Plato, that love precedes the other gods, who are identical with the angels. And hereupon Cavalcanti begins to show how the angels are identical with the ancient deities, and how the third

[1] See the "Commentarium Marsilii Ficini, in Convivium Platonis de Amore," which is added to his Latin translation of Plato. The banquets of the Platonic Academy seem to have been held in the villa at Careggi, generally presided over by Lorenzo the Magnificent, and in Florence under the presidency of Francesco Bandini. So says Ang. Maria Bandini ("Specimen," vol. i. pp. 60-61), and so Ficino himself says in a letter to Jacopo Bracciolini, published in Bandini's "Specimen," vol. i. pp. 62-63. "Platonici veteres urbana Platonis natalitia quotannis instaurabant; novi autem Platonici, Braccioline, et urbana et suburbana nostris temporibus celebrarunt; suburbana quidem apud Mag Laurentium Medicem in agro Caregio. Cuncta in libro nostro de amore narrantur. Urbana vero Florentiae sumtu regio celebravit Franc. Bandinus vir ingenio, magnificentia excellens. . . ." At the town meeting, of which he here makes mention, the subject of discussion was the immortality of the soul. But the Careggi banquet of which Ficino gives such very minute details in his "Commentarium," was by order of Lorenzo, who was then in Florence, presided over by Franc. Bandini. In fact, at the beginning of the first chapter he says: "Plato philosophorum pater, annos unum et octoginta aetatis, natus septimo, novembris die, quo ortus fuerat, discumbens in convivio, remotis dapibus, expiravit. Hoc autem convivium, quo et natalitia et anniversaria Platonis pariter continentur, prisci omnes Platonici usque ad Plotini et Porphyrii tempora quotannis instaurabant. Post vero Porphyrium mille ac ducentos annos, solennes hae dapes praetermissae fuerunt. Tandem *nostris temporibus, vir clarissimus Laurentius Medices platonicum convivium innovaturus*, Franciscum Bandinum Architriclinum constituit. Cum igitur septimum Novembris diem colere Bandinus instituisset, regis apparatu in agro Caregio novem platonicos accepit convivas."

sees that Christianity cannot fall; but he also sees that the mere authority of the prophets, of the Bible, and of revelation, no longer suffices to maintain it and keep it alive in men's minds. Hence it was necessary to have recourse to reason, to true philosophy, *i.e.*, to ancient philosophy; and among the diverse systems, that which best lent itself to his object, was certainly the Platonian. Thus, as he himself declares, arose in his mind the notion of founding Christianity upon the Platonic doctrine, and even of proving that they were one and the same thing, that the one was the logical consequence of the other. At that time this appeared to be a new revelation, and therefore he burnt candles before Plato, and adored him as a saint. In fact, in his book, "Della Religione Cristiana," the most solid arguments that he can find in its favour are the answers of the Sibyls and the prophecies of the coming of Jesus Christ, to be found in Virgil, Plato, Plotinus, and Porphyrius.

To him the life of Socrates is a continual symbol of the life of Jesus, the doctrines of the one are identical with those of the other. Thus antiquity received the benediction of Christianity, which in its turn was proved to be true by antiquity. What fact could be of higher concern to the learned of the fifteenth century? Ficino was so full of these ideas, so enthusiastic about them, that he sometimes seemed to look upon himself as the founder of a new religion rather than the inventor of a new system.

He wrote a large number of epistles, translations, and tractates in Latin; but the greatest and most solid monument to his fame was the first and, for a long time, the only good translation of Plato's works. At this he laboured unremittingly for a great part of his life, while meditating another work which was to be a systematic summary of the mass of his doctrines. Touching this, he tells us that he was long in uncertainty as to whether this work should be a philosophical exposition of the ancient Pagan religion, or a demonstration of Christianity, made with the assistance of ancient philosophy. The latter idea prevailed: nevertheless his new book was entitled "Platonic Theology," which plainly shows the author's groove of thought. It is a vast and ill-arranged encyclopedia of learning, written in a confused and colourless style, a defect observable in all his works, since, although he had consumed his whole life over the classics, the uncertainty of his ideas made it impossible for him to acquire any real originality or vigour of style. After careful examination of the "Theologia Platonica," we might almost say that the materials accumulated in it are, as it were, beginning to ferment,

ideas of Guido Cavalcanti upon love, and speaking of the *divine fury*, by means of which man, rising above his own nature, *in Deum transit*. By this God draws the soul, sunk in inferior things, once more upwards to the higher. And all terminates with an eulogium of Socratic love, and a hymn to the divine love or Holy Spirit, that has inspired the discussion, and illumined the Platonic orators.[1]

These philosophers, in trying to reconcile Paganism with Christianity, spirit with matter, the divine with the human, God with the world, and unable to discover the rational unity of all those things, reduced everything to symbols. Yet the great popularity and immense influence of this philosophy upon the literature and culture of the age, cannot be placed in doubt by any one; and it is impossible to deny its great historical importance. This philosophy, in fact, was the result of a new way of regarding the world, that emerges clearly enough, even from amid the clouds of the wildest allegories. For the Platonists the world had become the great physical and moral cosmos, created by divine love, in the image of the God who dwells therein, and whom they regarded no longer as a living personality, but as the supreme unity of all, the universal spirit, the absolute. And owing to their labours this conception penetrates and permeates the literature of the second half of the fifteenth century, and serves to determine its character. Hence it is plain that Italian Platonism, without having much scientific value, is yet a highly important element of modern culture.

But fully to understand this, we must also fix our attention upon the works of the man who best knew how to formulate and teach it. Marsilio Ficino had a boundless admiration for all the philosophy of the ancients; he studied and tried to assimilate Plato, Aristotle, the Neo-Platonists, and every fragment he could find of quotations from Confucius, Zoroaster, &c. All that which they say is sacred to him, merely because it is ancient; and thus his writings become a huge congeries of different elements, without his ever discovering a true dominant and organic principle, upon which to build up a system, and earn a right to the title of an original philosopher.

The Neoplatonic allegories imported among us by G. Plethon and other Greeks formed the only means by which he could harmonize the different elements. Yet Ficino's proposed aim was a highly remarkable one, and affords us a glimpse of his philosophic importance. Amid the triumph of Pagan antiquity, he

[1] "Commentarium," &c., Oratio vii. chap. xvii. "Quomodo agendae sunt gratiae Spiritu Sancto, qui nos ad hanc disputationem illuminavit atque accendit."

was impotent to find them. If we now glance at this philosophy of Ficino's in its entirety, there clearly stands out an irresistible tendency to such an universal and rational soul, which, in his writings, seems in fact to be confounded with the world and with God Himself. His third essences are identical with the ideas of Plato in an Aristotelian shape, which are afterwards united in more general souls, and how was it possible that they should not all be united in one soul? Is not the world, according to Ficino's own words, a great living animal? Has not nature a rational soul that *consulto agit?* Only in presence of these natural, inevitable consequences of his own premisses, our author stops himself, as it were, in affright, because he *must* accept and explain creation from the void, and cannot renounce the personal God of Christianity.

When, however, he begins to give a philosophical explanation of creation, he always recurs to the same ideas, and again approaches the consequences from which he rebels. God conceives (and in the Divine mind conception is equivalent to creation) the sensitive soul of things, and the angelic immortal soul. With this He forms the angels, and by their means creates the third essences which are too far beneath Him for Him to condescend to directly create them. But in man, besides the third essences, or soul of the body, there is also an immortal one directly infused by God, and by means of which the creature comes in contact with the Creator. In short, Ficino's creation is an emanation; his God is the soul and the unity of the world, indeed, the only definition he can give of it is the absolute unity of all things. Pantheism, the logical consequence of this system, was, in the very atmosphere of the fifteenth century, which found no other way of reconciling God and nature, the Divine and the human. Already scientifically sketched out by Cusano, and rendered popular by Ficino, it was afterwards lucidly formulated and maintained by Bruno. Cusano and Bruno, however, were real thinkers and philosophers, while Ficino was merely a learned man who wrote on philosophy without much originality. The Pantheistic idea showed itself in his works in an indistinct, confused, almost unconscious manner; but it was precisely this that proved it to be an outcome of the general need of the time, caused its instant popularity, and made it penetrate deeply into literature. In the verses of Lorenzo the Magnificent, of Poliziano, of Alberti, in many even of the contemporaneous prose-writers, we see the personal God changed into the absolute, the world is the great cosmos which it inhabits and animates; nature herself, no longer despised, becomes almost divine. And this transforma-

and that consequently certain assimilations take place, of which the author is unaware. In fact, there is something in it that may be called a result of the thought of the age, an impersonal progress in science, of which Ficino himself appears to be rather the instrument than the author. The question of the *consulto* or *non-consulto agit* in nature is, that around which from the commencement all the others are grouped, and it is solved in the same manner as by Gemistos Plethon. He finds in the world two different categories of souls. The first consists of intellectual, universal souls; the other of sensitive, mortal, but also reasoning souls. These, which he calls the *third essences* of things, are to be found throughout nature, which they animate. The earth, light, air, the planets, have each their third essence, and that explains why the earth produces plants, the water fish, &c. The third essences are also divided into twelve orders, according to the twelve constellations of the zodiac; but these are united, and are mingled together to form souls or third essences of a more general character. Thus in our own planet, water, earth, and air has each its own third essence; but this planet has also its special, more general, third essence which embraces all the others.

Then, too, man has two souls, one rational and sensitive, the third essence of the body, which dies; the other intellectual, immortal, emanating directly from God. By means of this, the creature finds himself in relation with the Creator and with the possibility of coming into contact with Him; in this are mirrored all the others, which breathe life into the universe. Thus man is a microcosm; he can descend to the animals, to inanimate nature, and rise to the angels, to God who speaks to him and guides him. Then, too, stars, planets, and even the stones have, by their third essences, direct influence over man's passions, man's destiny. And thus is demonstrated the truth of the occult sciences, in which Ficino had an almost childish belief. His continual melancholy was attributed by him to the influence of Saturn, and every day he was careful to change the amulets which he always wore upon his person. He wrote a treatise on all these things, entitled: "De vita cœlitus comparenda,"[1] which must be read in order to understand the point reached by the superstitious prejudices of a very learned man, and of a very advanced age The faith in occult sciences cherished by the most remarkable men of the Renaissance, is another of the numerous contradictions we find in that period. Yet, on carefully considering the question, we perceive that this faith was fed by the need of replacing supernatural by natural explanations, even when science

[1] Lugduni, 1567.

Avicenna, Scotus and St. Thomas, Plato and Aristotle, in order to combat the enemies of the Church. This, of necessity, brought about his union with Ficino, who desired to fight "the religion of ignorance and the philosophy of unbelief." At first a friend of the Medici, he ended by becoming an enthusiastic admirer of Savonarola, and was buried in the Church of St. Mark, shrouded, according to his last wish, in the frock of the Dominican friars[1] He ceased to live in 1494, a memorable year in the history of Italy, and of all Europe. Platonists and the learned men now disappeared very rapidly from the scene, and the national literature, so long in course of preparation, began to shine forth in all its new brilliancy.

8. Revival of Italian Literature.

In the fifteenth century our vulgar tongue had much decayed, chiefly by fault of the men of learning, who either wrote in Latin or twisted Italian into an artificial imitation of that tongue. In the year 1441, on the occasion of the stay of Pope Eugene IV. in Florence, a grand literary meeting took place in the Cathedral under the name of *Academia Coronaria*, because a silver crown was offered to him who should recite the best Italian verses upon friendship. And after all the prize could not be adjudged to any of the competitors, and so wretched were these verses that to this day no one can read them without amazement at their corrupt taste and puerile artifice. Still it would be a mistake to suppose that all had given up writing in the vulgar tongue. Italian songs composed by writers of little note, but many in number, were sung by the people both in town and country, and many familiar letters, tales, romances, and chronicles were also written in Italian. It was a literature chiefly made for the people, and in which the people took part in many ways, although it cannot be called popular in the strict sense of the word. And throughout the fifteenth century it continued to increase in importance, until the men of learning also forsook Latin, and recurring to Italian, thus initiated a second epoch in the history of our letters. The Platonists may be included among those who first returned to the vulgar tongue Cristoforo Landino had materially assisted in this, promoting by his commentaries the study of Dante and Petrarch. But to Leon Battista Alberti must be awarded a still more honourable post. Born in 1404 at Venice, whither his family had been exiled, he soon proved himself a most remarkable man. Of very rare strength and beauty, he succeeded no less

[1] See my "Storia di G. Savonarola," &c., book i chap v.

tion, as we have already said, was the work of Ficino and the Platonic Academy. Both vanished without establishing a new system, but they left instead a new method of looking upon the world, and a new conception of the Deity.

Ficino's enthusiastic ardour in expounding the new doctrines found a wide echo both in Italy and abroad. Students came from all parts of the world to attend the lectures he gave at the Studio. Many Englishmen carried Italian Hellenism to their own country; Reuchlin himself, in passing through Florence, was more than ever converted to the new ideas, which met with great favour in Germany, where Reformation began with the individual interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and by placing the believer in direct communication with his Creator, without the need of any mediator. In Italy, on the contrary, the results of learning always remained merely literary and scientific.

Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, so celebrated throughout Europe, was known among us by the name of the intellectual Phœnix, on account of the knowledge attributed to him of twenty-two languages, of his great learning and extraordinary memory. To these gifts he united much goodness of character and an amiable and attractive appearance, and although of princely family, he had abandoned everything for his studies. Excited by the praises showered upon him, and by a philosophy which pretended to embrace the whole universe in its allegories, he proposed a strange species of scientific tournament, that was to be held in Rome. He had summed up all knowledge in nine hundred conclusions, on each of which he declared himself prepared to make a reply to scholars from all parts, whom he invited to discuss with him, promising to pay the travelling expenses of all those who were poor. The experiment was prevented from taking place by the difficulties raised by the Pope, to whose authority Giovanni Pico was always most submissive. But notwithstanding his great reputation, this scholar's intellect was substantially but little different from that of Ficino's other followers. His acquirements, though extensive, were superficial, his judgments dictated rather by enthusiasm than critical faculty. He considered the poems of Lorenzo dei Medici superior to those of Dante and Petrarch. Of the majority of the twenty-two languages he was supposed to have studied, he knew little more than the alphabet and the elements of grammar. He was, however, one of the first promoters of Oriental studies, as well as one among the best of Greek and Latin scholars. But neither his Italian and Latin writings, much less his philosophy, show any marks of originality. He tried to reconcile Averhoes and

free from grammatical errors, while Alberti in correcting these errors, obscures the golden simplicity of him who appears to be his precursor. In his language one perceives the mixture of the popular and learned styles, but the two elements are not always well combined. If Alberti decided on imitating and almost copying the work of another, this is only additional proof that the book expressed the feelings and opinions of the period, and this gives it importance not only in the history of our language and literature, but also in that of Italian society.[1]

The "Governo della famiglia" is the work of a man who lived between the end of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century, and, after taking part in political struggles, had retired disgusted to the country to devote himself to composition. Thus we have a faithful description of the social, moral, and intellectual condition of Italians in the fifteenth century, such as we search for in vain in the pages of history. In particular, we find a profound disgust of political life, "that life of insults, envy, passions, and suspicions."[2] The Italian spirit already feels condemned to fall back upon itself, without finding in its own conscience the comfort of religious life. Virtue seems to be nothing but the result of an almost artistic well being, "it is all gaiety and grace."[3] All that is desired is to have the mind undisturbed by any cupidity, repentance, or grief;[4] honesty is woman's finest *ornament;* vice makes her vulgar and ugly.[5] In this book the new tendencies infused by Platonism in the Italian mind are very apparent. Virtue, in fact, proceeds from a necessary law of our nature, not from the command of any superior authority. When the head of the family marries, he leads his wife before the household shrine of the Madonna, and there kneeling down together, they pray, not to the virgin nor the saints, but to the Most High. Neither do they supplicate for happiness in the other world, but only that it may be given to them to enjoy the goods of this life. The wife must know how to govern her household with tact and gentleness,

[1] This book, generally held to be the work of Pandolfini, was afterwards attributed to Alberti, especially by Signor F. Palermo, who took up the question so hotly and exaggerated so much in his "Prolegomini" added to the "Padre di famiglia" (Florence, tipografia Cenniniana scientifica, 1872) as to entirely forget the method and limits of scientific criticism. Pandolfini died before Alberti, and it is hard to imagine that he would have copied from learned prose and not only turned it into familiar spoken Italian, but introduced idioms and ungrammatical expressions where none existed before. Alberti, however, expressly declared himself to be the author. The question has been recently discussed by Cortesi, Scipioni, and Pellegrini. The first sustains the priority of Pandolfini, the other two with some strong arguments take a contrary view.

[2] Pandolfini, "Trattato del governo della famiglia," p 21; Venice, Gondoliere Printing Press, 1841. [3] Ibid., p. 5. [4] Ibid., p 14. [5] Ibid, p. 262.

admirably in all bodily exercises than in mental labour. Accomplished in music, singing, and the arts of design, he was versed in letters and had studied the moral, as well as the mathematical or natural sciences, in which many discoveries are attributed to him.[1] Landino, Poliziano,[2] and others exalt not only the universality of his genius, but also, which is more noteworthy, his singular merit in promoting the study and use of Italian. This, too, is plainly shown in his works, although many disputes have arisen concerning them. Some of Alberti's verses have certainly a singular freshness and spontaneity[3] which would excite surprise, had not Poliziano and Lorenzo dei Medici already warned us that the Italian muse was now awaking, animated by a new spirit, and almost born again to a second youth. His prose is still very artificial in its imitation of Latin; yet one work entitled "La cura della famiglia" merits special mention, particularly its third book, "L'Economico" or "Il Padre di famiglia," in which a good father of a family and the best way of ruling a household is carefully described. This is almost a separate work, and in a preface to it, Alberti takes the defence of the Italian language which he declares to be in no wise inferior to the Latin,[4] and promises to try and make use of a "bare and simple style" ("stile nudo e semplice.") Certainly, in this book his prose is far more spontaneous and familiar than usual; the author seems to wish to return to the golden simplicity of the Trecento

"L'Economico" is generally known in the much freer and more popular form given to it by Agnolo Pandolfini under the title of "Del Governo della famiglia," and in this form it is one of the finest monuments of our national literature. It is maintained by some that Pandolfini copied and improved on Alberti, but this is denied by others. What is certain is that the former writes in familiar Italian, in a rich and graphic style, not always

[1] See the "Commentario alla Vita di L. B. Alberti," in the fourth volume of Vassari, Le Monnier edition, Tiraboschi, "S. L. I," vol. vi. p. 414 and fol.; the edition of L. B. Alberti's "Opere," edited by Bonucci and published in Florence (Tip. Galileiana) in 1843 and following years. This edition includes a Life of Alberti by an anonymous author. See also the "Elogi di L. B. Alberti" in the works of G. B. Nicolini, Le Monnier edition, 1843, vol. iii p 401 and fol.; the "Elogio" written by Pozzetti, published in Florence in 1789, and finally "Gli Alberti di Firenze, Genealogia," &c., recently brought out by Cav. L. Passerini in two large and elegant volumes, by commission of the Duc de Lugnes. Florence, Cellini, 1870.

[2] See Bandini's "Specimen," vol. i p. 164; Tiraboschi's "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p 420, in which a letter by Poliziano is given.

[3] See the "Opere" of Alberti and Trucchi's "Poesie Italiane inedite." Prato, 1846–47, vol. ii. p. 335.

[4] Alberti, "Opere," vol. ii. p 221 and fol.

far-stretching plans for the future, since it is better "to think day by day, and dance in time to the music that one hears."[1] When the Pope wished to call the Duke of Lorraine into Italy, Lorenzo uses every effort to prevent it, alleging the many dangers it would bring about, and reminding his Holiness "that human hands cannot hold the reins of fortune."[2] The Duke of Milan, Lodovico il Moro, always uncertain, changeable, and ambitious, who hourly caused fresh complications, must be treated, says Lorenzo, as suits his nature, namely, by giving way to him as long as is possible without danger; but in such a way "as to remain in the saddle even if he should try to fling out." Therefore is it all the more necessary to keep on friendly terms with the Venetians, "so as always to have some anchors in the sea."[3]

And when his son Giovanni, who at the age of seventeen years had been for some time a Cardinal, is starting for Rome, Lorenzo warns him of the dangers to which he will be exposed in that very corrupt city, and reminds him that union with the Church is useful to Florence, and that "the interest of our family goes with that of the city, so that you ought to be a good link in the matter; and at all events there should not fail you the means of saving both the goat and the cabbages, as the saying goes."[4] This easy, familiar, vigorous style of prose soon became very general in Tuscany, and Lorenzo dei Medici was one of the first to make use of it, as he was also one of the first to write verses in the vulgar tongue. In the fourteenth century, two different styles of poetry had been grafted one upon the other, which to this day can be easily distinguished in the sonnets and canzonets of that time, and even in the "Divina Commedia" itself.

The one was simple, clear, natural—an inspiration which, if not wholly popular, was certainly much nearer to the people than the other poetry, which was artificial, allegorical, scholastic, courtly, of the French or Provençal school. Out of this union of different elements, the national genius, even then assisted by classical studies, had extracted a new literature. And this easily penetrated among the people, who, fascinated and carried away by an art beyond their own power, and yet entirely to their taste, and fitted to their comprehension, had little longer need of other songs, and other tales. But towards the end of the fourteenth century, literary men wrote in Latin, and the people, who, amid their

[1] Fabroni, "Vita Laurentii Medicis," Pisis, 1784, vol. ii. p. 312, note 179.
[2] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 359, note 206.
[3] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 363.
[4] Fabroni calls this letter the song of the swan, *tanquam cycnea fuit*, because Lorenzo died soon afterwards (vol. ii. p. 308, note 178).

in order to maintain general harmony, and ensure general well being.' Reading these things is like looking upon one of Masaccio's or Lippi's pictures. There is no effort towards the Infinite, there is a quiet, self-contented harmony, resembling the universal principle of life as it was then understood by Italians. Every little detail of the picture brings before our eyes the democracy of Florence, with its refinement and civil equality. Whereas in almost all the rest of Europe the peasant was still the slave of the soil, here he had already become his master's torment. He wants an ox, a cow, or sheep to be bought for him; wants to have his debts paid; asks for a dowry for his daughter; to have a house built and the furniture provided; and withal, is never contented.[1]

But the founts of the new literature are many in number; and while speaking only of prose, we must mention the political and diplomatic correspondences which became, in this century, one of the most notable branches of our literature. These were no displays of rhetoric, but written for the purpose of conducting affairs to a given end; therefore they soon attained remarkable simplicity, spontaneity, and lucidity.

In the recently published "Commissioni" of Rinaldo degli Albizzi,[2] we notice the writer's efforts to graft the uncultivated language of the people upon the Latin periods of the learned. But in the letters of Lorenzo dei Medici, these efforts are at an end, and the new political prose has triumphed over every difficulty without however concealing its two original elements. Of these letters, Guicciardini himself speaks in the highest praise.[3] They show on the one hand the admirable prudence with which Lorenzo sought to maintain the political balance of Italy, the great authority exercised by him over all the States of the Peninsula, and on the other, the popular ease with which this disciple of Ficino and Poliziano knew how to write. When Ferdinand of Naples wished to form a special alliance with the Pope, Lorenzo immediately sets to work to prevent "this spark of change in Italy,"[4] and a general peace is concluded instead. When his daughter Maddalena marries Francesco Cibo, the Pope's natural son, he instantly gives notice that he does not intend to form any compacts to the hurt of the general peace of Italy, nor to make

[1] Pandolfini, "Trattato del governo della famiglia," p. 42.

[2] These have been published in three vols. by the Società di Storia Patria: Florence, Cellini, 1867–69, and go from the year 1399 down to 1433.

[3] In his "Storia Fiorentina."

[4] A. Desjardins, "Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane" (3 vols 4to): Paris, 1859–65, Imprimerie Impériale, vol. i. p. 214. It is only just to mention that the chief part of these documents were discovered by an Italian, G. Canestrini.

from whom she had been forcibly torn, is the only one who sees that she is really flesh and blood, and who now joyfully gives her refuge.

"Mischiando la letizia col dolore."[1]

Italian poetry of the fifteenth century was chiefly based by the *literati* on what was generally, if somewhat incorrectly known as popular poetry. Among us undoubtedly the songs of men of letters and those of the people are so much intermingled, and exercise so much reciprocal influence, that even for the most acute and intelligent critics it is often extremely difficult to disentangle the one from the other. But in any case, one of the first, not merely to protect, but to promote and cultivate the new poetry, was Lorenzo dei Medici. To one who founded a tyranny by leaning on the people in opposition to the nobility, it was highly convenient to make himself also a popular poet, particularly in a city like Florence, where intellectual dominion was the firmest basis of political power. In fact the woodcuts of the period represent Lorenzo singing verses to the populace.

In order to do justice to Lorenzo's literary merit, it is by no means necessary to join in the extravagant flights of Roscoe and Ruth, who try to prove him a genius.[2] In his poetry, as in everything else, he displayed great knowledge of human nature and a fine taste, without, however, having sufficient elevation of mind to reach the heights of art. This too is shown by his own account of his earliest inspirations. On the death of the beautiful Simonetta, the beloved of Giuliano dei Medici, many poets, among them Poliziano,[3] wrote verses in her honour. Lorenzo, in order to do something of the same kind, feigned to have lost his lady love, but then sought for a living one, whom he found in Lucrezia Donati,[4] a beautiful and spirited young girl, and immediately applied himself to the composition of love songs. But this did not prevent him from making arrangements in Rome for his

[1] Republished by A D'Ancona (Pisa, Nistri, 1863) See, too, the three volumes of "Sacre Rappresentazioni dei Secoli," xiv., xv., and xvi, by the same author · Florence, Le Monnier, 1872.

[2] Far juster is the judgment of Gino Capponi in his "Storia della Repubblica Fiorentina," and of Baron de Reaumont in his work, "Lorenzo dei Medici," Leipsic, 1873. Carducci has frequently written with great originality of Lorenzo's poetic faculty and temperament, but in our opinion he praises him rather too highly

[3] "Dum pulchra effertur nigro Simonetta feretro Blandus et examini spirat in ore lepos," &c

[4] "Comento di Lorenzo di Medici sopra alcuni dei suoi Sonetti, nel fine delle sue poesie volgari" (edition of 1554). See also Roscoe, "Life of Lorenzo dei Medici," chap. II.

struggles for liberty, had made much progress in civilization, had once more to provide for themselves. Throughout the Tuscan land were then heard new songs, new *rispetti*, new roundelays,[1] while in the towns there was a prodigious crop of novels, tales, and knightly adventures, which had travelled to us from France, besides sacred representations or mysteries. And all these were naturally in the vulgar tongue.

A few Rispetti, a few Strambotti, and a certain number of songs really issued from the heart of the people. To this day they are still to be heard in the villages of Tuscany, where, as D'Ancona observes, they seem echoes of the last creative efforts of a nation on the point of losing its liberty.[2] But there are many others, besides tales of chivalry, and sacred and profane plays, which cannot be called popular creations, since they were generally the compositions of public storytellers, who, although belonging to the class for which they wrote, possessed a certain amount of rough and imperfect culture. In these, many classical reminiscences and tricks of rhetoric are to be found, but very seldom the true impulsiveness of the popular vein. Still these works have a certain simplicity, and even a certain ingenious delicacy of feeling, which attest their semi-popular origin, and recall the fact that in those times the higher classes and men of cultivation were much more corrupt than the people. While the learned men were employed upon works like the "Ermafrodito,"[3] the "Invettive," and obscenities of every description, the story-tellers narrated the fantastic feats of knights-errant, the unhappy loves of Hippolitus and Dianora, and their heroic self-devotion;[4] the sorrows of Ginevra degli Almieri, who, coming out of the tomb in which she has been buried alive, is not recognized either by her husband or her own mother, who both refuse her shelter. Her first lover,

[1] We have already seen in Pandolfini, that the Italian peasantry, and more especially the Tuscan, who are here in question, were in the fifteenth century superior in culture and prosperity to those of the rest of Europe. The novel writers, like Sacchetti, for instance (see Novelle 88 and 202), frequently speak of shrewd, well-to-do peasants. In the "Beca di Dicomano," in which the author, Pulci, describes peasant life, a peasant says to his sweetheart:—"Thou knowest that I am ignorant and worthy—and I have cattle, and houses, and land. If thou wouldst take me, I would take thee."—See also Burckhardt, "Die Cultur der Renaissance," first edition, p. 356.

[2] A. D'Ancona, "La Poesie Popolare Fiorentina nel Secolo," xv.

[3] This work was published in the "Rivista Contemporanea" of Turin, vol. xxx. No. 106, September, 1862. See also Carducci's remarks in his preface to the volume, "Le Rime, le Stanze e l'Orfeo" of A. Poliziano · Florence, Barbèra, 1863. These two writers are those who have gone most thoroughly into the subject of ancient popular Italian poetry.

[4] This legend is also to be found in the works of Leon Battista Alberti.

> "Arrendetevi, belle,
> A' vostri innamorati,
> Rendete e' cuor furati,
> Non fate guerra a maggio."[1]

The crafty politician who sought to stupefy his people in the gro
sensuality in which he himself indulged, here shows his natu
openly, with great impulsiveness of style and freshness of for
But here, too, we see that his is an art of corruption carrying i
own condemnation on its face. If in his "Canzoni a ballo" (son
for dancing), he contents himself with the pleasures of idlen
and of a life of sensuality, in the "Canti Carnascialeschi," he go
much further. Some of these bring before us with much gaie
mythological figures that are full of life; others again descri
indecencies too horrible to be mentioned in these days, and whi
were then openly sung in the public thoroughfares, the ackno
ledged works of a prince who had gained the admiration of t
whole civilized world He was accustomed to direct the carni
festivities and masquerades, calling sculptors and painters[2] to h
assistance to enhance their brilliancy, and using elegance of ta
as an engine for the corruption of manners. He had music co
posed on purpose to accompany his obscene songs. He associat
with the *literati*, artists, and populace, and was the soul a
leader of the bacchanalian revels. Still it must be confessed t
Lorenzo, by taking up the different kinds of poetry he fou
diffused among the people, and endowing them with artis
dignity, made himself the promoter of a literary revolution,
which, although surpassed by some of his contemporaries,
nevertheless took a very high place.[3]

But the principal reviver of Italian poetry in the fifteen
century was Angelo Ambrogini of Monte Pulciano, called Po
ziano. Born the 14th of July, 1454, he was, up to 1474, a stude
in the Florentine Studio, where he followed the teachings
Ficino, Andronicus, Argiropulos, and Landino. At the age
sixteen he had already begun a translation of Homer, whi

[1] The Canzone begins thus:—

> "Ben venga maggio
> E 'l gonfalon selvaggio."

[2] Vasari, in his "Vita di Piero di Cosimo," tells us of the care with which th
fêtes, which long continued in Florence, were arranged, and declares them to
things ... ento d... ... "Canti Carnascialeschi" by different authors w
afterwar... ... (ed.) two volumes by Lasca · Fiorenza, 1559.

[3] See ... ...rks C. Carducci in his fine "Prefazione alle Poesie di Lozenz
Florence ... ...ra.

marriage with Clarice Orsini. His mother Lucrezia Tornabuoni, writing at this time to her husband, Piero dei Medici, speaks of the bride in the following terms: "She is of seemly stature and of fair complexion, and has sweet manners, if less gracious than ours; she has great modesty, and so will soon fall in with our customs. Her hair is not fair, for there is no such thing here; her tresses incline to red, and she has great abundance of them. Her visage inclines to be rather round, but it does not displease me. Her throat is well turned, but seems to me somewhat thin. Her bosom we cannot see, for it is here the fashion to wear it covered up, but it appears to be of good quality. Her hand is long and slender, and altogether we rate the maiden much above the common."[1] But after this minute description of the bride's physique, she has not a word to say of her mind, talents, or character. Lorenzo, who became betrothed to this young girl at the age of twenty-one, wrote these words in his Ricordi,[2] June 4, 1469: "I have taken a wife, or rather she was given to me" (Tolsi donna . . . ovvero mi fu data), and his verses show him to be the true son of his mother. At the age of seventeen, he described the lips, eyes, and hair of his mistress, praised the mountains, the flowery meadow, the river, the rustic solitudes, in which he could gaze upon her image far from the noise of towns. Even at that time we find fine taste and ease in his verses, which are written in a spontaneous, and sometimes too familiar a manner: he describes nature and the actual world with the graphic power of a keen observer. These qualities were afterwards still more conspicuous in Lorenzo's various compositions, for he had a genuine admiration for the beautiful, loved country life, and was a true artist and painter of the outer world. To his descriptive power he unites in his "Beoni" a mordant and satiric spirit; but the special characteristics of his poetry are chiefly apparent in his "Canzoni a ballo" taken from popular sources and given in their real form, and in his "Canti Carnascialeschi" of which barely the germ existed, and to which he gave a place in literature, thus becoming the creator of that description of verse.

The ruling idea in these poems is: enjoy your life to-day, give yourselves up to pleasure, and take no thought for the morrow. Young men, be not timid with women, and as for you ladies—:

[1] "Tre lettere di Lucrezia Tornabuoni a Piero dei Medici, ed altre lettere di vari concernenti al matrimonio di Lorenzo il Magnifico con Clarici Orsini." Marriage album collected by Cesare Guasti. Florence · Le Monnier, 1859

[2] Reprinted by Roscoe, in the Appendix to his "Life of Lorenzo," Doc. xii.

and already feels herself being borne away to another life:

> ". . . . Heu! nostro torpet in ore sonus;
> Heu rapior! Tu vive mihi, tibi mortua vivam.
> Caligant oculi iam mihi morte graves"

These gifts, which Poliziano possessed from the first, grew ever riper, as may be seen by many of his later poems, especially in that on the death of the fair Simonetta, and the very fine one upon violets[1] In reading these lines, more classical than any before written by the men of learning, the reader, sometimes almost carried away, may fancy he sees the Latin transforming itself into the new and lovely flower of Italian poetry, which in truth is budding to life again before his eyes. For now, in fact, the Italian chrysalis breaks though the Latin shell in which it had so long been hidden, and at last comes forth into the sunlight.

Poliziano has earned immortality in the history of our literature, by the "Stanze" written by him for the Joust of Giuliano dei Medici, and which signalize the commencement of the second and no less splendid period of Italian poetry. They form the beginning of a poem that breaks off at the forty-sixth octave of the second book, interrupted, very probably, by the murder of Giuliano in the Pazzi plot.[2] The work, however, is not of a nature to lose

[1] "Molles o violae, Veneris munuscula nostrae,
Dulce quibus tanti pignus amoris inest;
Quae vos, quae genuit tellus? quo nectare odoras
Sparserunt Zephyri mollis et aura comas?
Vos ne in acidaliis aluit Venus aurea campis?
Vos ne sub Idalio pavit Amor nemore?
His ego crediderim citharas ornare corollis,
Permessi in roseo margine Pieridas.
Hoc flore ambrosios incingitur Hora capillos,
Hoc tegit indociles Gratia blanda sinus,
Hoc Aurora suae nectit redimicula fronti,
Cum roseum verno pandit ab axe diem," &c.

[2] It is generally believed that these "Stanze" were written in 1469, that is, when Poliziano was only fifteen years of age. The mistake arose through confounding the Joust of Lorenzo with that of Giuliano. The former was really given in 1469, and was described by Luca Pulci, say some, by his brother Luigi, say others. In any case, it is a work of little merit and very artificial. The poet says to Lorenzo: "Thy victory (in the tilting match) has naught to envy of the victories of Æmilius, Marcellus, Scipio, thou hast well earned the honour.

"'Di riportar te stesso in su la chioma,'

i.e., laurels upon Lauro's head" The Joust of Giuliano was instead given January 28, 1475, and was described by Poliziano, who was then twenty-one. It is, indeed, possible that the "Otta ve" were written in 1478, and that they

made Ficino accord him the title of the Homeric child, and secured to him the lasting protection of Lorenzo, who receiving the youth in his own palace, made him tutor to his son Piero.[1] At twenty-nine years he was professor of Greek and Latin eloquence in the Studio, and his lessons were attended not only by Italians like Pico della Mirandola and the Medici themselves, but by foreigners of all nations. Soon after, in 1486, he was named canon of the cathedral. In a short time his fame filled all Italy, and even crossed the Alps. He showed very great critical acumen in his "Miscellanea," particularly in his collations of old texts. Afterwards, too, in collating the edition of the "Pandects," published at Venice in 1450, with the Laurentian Codex known as the "Pandects of Amalfi," he made certain observations which, although overpraised, showed the great aid philosophy could render to jurisprudence.[2] Poliziano's best productions are undoubtedly his poems, and often the finest introductory addresses which he delivered in the chair were nothing but Latin verses, in the composition of which he was unrivalled, even during early youth. At the age of eighteen he had earned praise by his Greek verses; but had taken the world by storm with his Latin elegy on the death of Albiera degli Albizzi. In this the pagan feeling for beauty of form, and the ethereal grace of the painters of the Quattrocento seem to be blended together; the Italian language fused with the Latin, which, in spite of being a dead tongue, has here the freshness of a living and spoken language. It would seem as though the breath of popular Italian song inspired new life into the man of learning, and enabled him to endow his Latin with the primitive spontaneity of the Greek. In this elegy we find the same unapproachable elegance, the same wealth of description, the same somewhat artificial diction as in his immortal Italian stanzas. Very beautiful are the last words of the dying woman to her husband, who, with terror-stricken eyes is watching the ever-increasing pallor stealing over the countenance of the loved one who

"Illius aspectu morientia lumina pascit,"

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[1] Isidoro del Lungo, "Uno scolare dello Studio Fiorentino," a memoir published in the "Nuova Antologia of Florence," vol. x. p. 215, and fol By the same author see "La Patria e gli antenati di Angelo Poliziano" in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," Series III., vol. xi. p. 9 and fol.

[2] Professor Bonamici of Pisa has examined the notes on the Pandects of his work "Il Poliziano Giureconsulto" (Pisa), Nistri, 1863, and has endeavoured to reduce the author's merit within its just limits.

transformation into theology, turns to the ballad written by Olimpio of Sassoferrato and notes these lines:

"La brunettina mia
Con l'acqua della fonte
Si lava il dì la fronte
E il seren petto," &c.,

will immediately perceive the distance traversed, and appreciate the change that has taken place.

Poliziano raised the popular Rispetti and Strambotti to a new dignity, and with so much taste and elegance, "that for the first time perhaps in poetry," says Carducci, "he gave an Attic stamp to Florentine idioms, and artistic finish to familiar expressions."[1] The ballad, too, which already in the Trecento had received a literary form, and thus embellished retained popularity, serving as a model for the many sacred Laudi composed during the fifteenth century, and even for the songs of Lorenzo dei Medici who endowed them with a new literary garb, was now raised by Poliziano almost to the dignity of the Ode, without losing any of its primitive simplicity.[2] Although in these lyrics we meet with sensual allusions which remind us of Lorenzo's companion, the poet never forsakes decency in the same fashion as his Mæcenas.

In his "Orfeo" he also made an attempt at drama; but his dialogue is sometimes lyric, without ever rising to a true display of the passions. Dramatic poetry is born late in the life of a nation, that is, only when the national spirit and national tongue have reached a healthy and vigorous maturity. Italy had barely touched this point when she fell a prey to foreign invaders, who destroyed her institutions and prevented her from finding, in this essentially national kind of poetry, a way of escape from the Latin travesty, whose fetters she had so often before shaken off.

And Poliziano, in spite of a fineness of taste, that was almost Greek, could never have had the power to attain to real dramatic elevation, or create the theatre required by us We have only to remember his career as a courtier, to understand why his genius could take no lofty flights. Often our indignation is excited by seeing the author of so many beautiful

[1] See the Prefazione to Poliziano's poems, p cxvii. D'Ancona is of opinion that the "Rispetti" still sung among the hills in Tuscany are, at least in their general characteristics, the same that the Medicean school took from the people, in order to give them back dressed in a more literary shape. And thus by force of custom the people have gone on singing them to this day.—"Rivista Contemporanea" quoted above.

[2] Carducci, "Prefazione," &c., p. cxxv.

much by being left unfinished, as it is totally wanting in unity and epic matter, so that it is very hard to divine how the poet would have continued or finished it. Its great merit consists in its limpid, elegant style, which has an incomparable freshness. Carducci justly observes that the octave verse, that was diffuse in Boccaccio, diluted in Pulci, harsh and unequal in Lorenzo dei Medici, acquires in Poliziano's poetry the unity, harmony, colour, variety, and character which it has ever since preserved. Placed between the original primitive literature of the Trecento, and the more varied, refined, yet still imitative literature that flourished in the Cinquecento, it unites the vigour of the one with the grace of the other, thus resembling those masters of the Quattrocento, who improved upon the painting of Giotto, and perfected the technicalities of their art without falling into the conventionalities which so quickly arose in the Cinquecento. But we must remember that all this is only true as regards form, since, as to substance, Poliziano certainly has neither the elevation nor vigour of Dante, nor the imagination of Ariosto. But it is a form which may be called poetry itself, since it always depicts nature with unapproachable eloquence. Poliziano's women are neither so mystic and ethereal as Dante's, nor so sensuous as Ariosto's; they have, however, a delicious delicacy and sweetness; they recall the pictured forms of Lippi and Ghirlandaio. The fair Simonetta stands out in the "Stanze" a real and visible woman, yet she does not lack ideal beauty;

> "Ridegli attorno tutta la foresta,
>
> . . . . .
>
> L'aer d'intorno si fa tutto ameno,
> Ovunque gira le luci amorose." [1]

The poet only seeks reality, but it is always an elegant and gracious reality. His images, freed from mediæval mysticism, seem to make use of the mythological garb in which they are often enfolded, to cover without hiding the forms of the body from which they are never separated. Their nudity appears from time to time adorned with classic enamel of a Pagan freshness that is specially characteristic of the Renaissance.

Who, after reading in the "Vita Nuova" or the "Divina Commedia," the descriptions of Beatrice, ever on the point of

described another Joust, which took place in the early part of that year. All this has been brought to light by Professor Del Lungo. See his own words given in Carducci's preface to Poliziano's Poems, p. xxix.

[1] "Stanze," book i. pp. 43, 44.

by nature damp and cold, is in this constellation, it acquires greater efficacy. Even his history of the *Guerra Napolitana* between Giovanni d'Anjou and Ferdinand of Aragon, although of some interest as the work of a contemporary writer, is full of useless digressions, wanders into astrological considerations, and lacks all critical power.[1] To really know Pontano and understand the value of his writings, a purely literary value, we must read his "Dialoghi" and Latin poems, especially those that are lyrical.

These are marked by the same qualities found in Poliziano: an extremely fine classical taste, and a lucid, graphic style, as vigorous as that of one using a living language, for in this case also, the freshness of the Latin springs from its intermixture with the language spoken by the author, which, however, is not Florentine but Neapolitan Italian. Hence, notwithstanding Pontano's great poetical talent, his works show an undeniable inferiority of form compared with those of Poliziano; Tuscan atticism lends to the Latinity of the latter a Grecian elegance that does not exist to the same extent in that of Pontano. Nevertheless he certainly succeeds admirably in binding the Latin to modern ideas, and where it fails him, he Latinizes Italian or Neapolitan words, and rushes onwards with the speed of one speaking a language learnt from the cradle. In his dialogues "Charonte," "Antonio," "Asino," which are all works of imagination in elegant Latin prose, and intermingled with beautiful poems, there are pictures of Neapolitan manners, popular festivals, rustic love scenes, and a series of anecdotes so full of *verve* as to remind the reader of Boccaccio's finest pages. The fête of the *Porcello* at Naples, the temper of Italian cities, the corruption of the Roman priesthood, the ridiculous disputes of the pedants, and the fury with which they fall upon those who dare to use some particle or ablative in a manner opposed to their own, often, fallacious rules, all these things are given with a descriptive power, a freshness and *vis comica* sufficing to place Pontano among men of true literary genius. He writes in Latin, it is true, but his spirit and his intellect are modern, and his works are therefore real gems of Italian literature. In his *Antonius*, we see Neapolitans sitting in the shade and

[1] For Pontano's Life see Tiraboschi, "S. L. I.," vol. vi. p. 950; Professor C. M. Tallarigo, "Giovanni Pontano e i suoi tempi," 2 vols (Naples, Morano, 1874). This monograph contains many chosen specimens of Pontano's best Latin poems, with translations by Professor Ardito, and the whole of the Latin dialogue (Charon). Settembrini, in his "Storia della Letteratura Italiana" (Naples, 1866–72, 3 vols.), speaks of Pontano with a truth and eloquence (vol. i. pp. 281–83), which incited Professor Tallarigo to the composition of the above-quoted monograph. See also the Basle edition of Pontano's works.

verses condescending to write others full of the most fawning adulation. This it is impossible to pardon him, even when we remember the depth and sincerity of his affection for his patron. He was standing by Lorenzo's side when the conspiracy of the Pazzi broke out; he was the first to close the door of the sacristy as soon as his master was safely within it; on Lorenzo's return from his perilous Neapolitan journey, he welcomed him with very beautiful Latin verses, such as might be addressed by a lover to his mistress; and on Lorenzo's death he lamented him in words of intense grief, and quickly followed him to the tomb. But all this cannot prevent us from feeling deep and contemptuous compassion for a poet who humiliates himself to his patron, even to the extent of begging for his old clothes, and it is easy to understand that the summit of art can never be reached in that way.

The literature of the Trecento may be considered as exclusively Tuscan; that of the Renaissance quickly became national. In fact, as we have seen, men of learning flourished in all parts of the Peninsula, and now writers in the vulgar tongue began to spring up contemporaneously and with the same characteristics in different provinces. Thus from Poliziano and Florence, we may travel towards the south where we shall find Giovanni Gioviano Pontano. Born at Cerreto in Umbria (1426), he soon made his way to Naples, and became the minister and ambassador of Ferdinand of Aragon; he accompanied him everywhere; advised him in the weightiest affairs of the State, in which he always took a prominent part, and was tutor to Alfonso II. Little by little he became a thorough Neapolitan, and we may say that he was the best representative of the state of culture of that Court and of that time. A man of business, an acute diplomatist, and one of the most celebrated of the learned men, he instituted the *Academia Pontaniana* by the reorganization of that already founded by Antonio Panormita under the name of the *Porticus Antoniana.* He wrote—always in Latin—an infinite number of philosophical, scientific, astrological, political, and historical works. But in all these works the approaching decline of learning was already foreshadowed. His tractates "Della Fortezza," "Della Liberalità," "Della Beneficenza," &c., as also that "Del Principe," are mere dissertations without any originality, diffuse collections of moral sentences. His various astrological works include all the prejudices of the time, without any attempt to build them upon any pretended philosophical theory, after the manner of Ficino. The sun, the heart of heaven and of the universe, is the generative principle of all things. The constellation of Cancer, which influences cold bodies, is called the house of the moon, because when that planet,

Acuia, *Panicocolis studiosa lupini*, and Marianella, who sings in accompanying Capódimonte,

> "et cognita bucellatis
> Ulmia, et intortis tantum laudata torallis," [1]

are all moving and living beings in his "Lepidina." [2] Vesuvius, in the form of an old man, descends the mountain on an ass to come to the fête, and the women all crowd round him. To one he gives a thimble, to another a spindle, to a third a jest, and all push to get nearer to him and his donkey, greeting both with loud and joyous cries,

> "Plebs plaudit, varioque asinum clamore salutant,
> Brasiculisque apioque ferum nucibusque coronant."

The same merits are to be observed in the two books of his "Amori," in his "Endecasillabi," in his "Buccolica," and in his dydaschylic poem "L'Urania," in which there are admirable descriptions of nature And we always find a strange mixture of two languages, one living, the other dead, in which both seem to acquire fresh life ; and this rich and varied medley of classical imagery, fantastic whimsies, splendid descriptions of scenery, and modern feeling, all mingled and all fermenting in the fancy of this man of learning changed into a poet, show us how the new literature was born of the ancient, and how, in the midst of the classical world so carefully conjured up, it was possible for the chivalric poem, apparently so unsuited to the age of learning, to spring into existence.

At this point we ought perhaps to mention the political letters of Ferrante d'Aragona, which also bear the signature of his prime minister Pontano, who certainly had no small part in their compilation. But, besides the difficulty of precisely determining what this part was, we shall have occasion to return to the subject at a more fitting moment. For the present it is enough to say that these letters are of rare merit, so perspicuous and eloquent, that they might bear comparison with some of our best prose, were not their Italian style too often adulterated with Neapolitan dialect, which, although it may add strength and spontaneity, naturally detracts from the unity and elegance of the language.

Besides Pontano, there was another Neapolitan writer, who died in the second half of the fifteenth century, and left a volume of

[1] *Taralli* are cakes very common in Naples to this day.
[2] See Tallarigo, *op cit*, vol ii. p 619 and fol.

cutting jokes on passers-by; Pontano himself alive and speaking; his son, who recounts family quarrels; a poet who, preceded by a trumpeter, according to the Neapolitan custom of the day, mounts a hill to recite the description of a battle, and halts from time to time to take a pull at his wine flask. Then we read the Ode of Galatea pursued by Polyphemus, which is one of his best poems:—

> "Dulce dum ludit Galatea in unda,
> Et movet nudos agilis lacertos,
> Dum latus versat, fluitantque nudae
> Aequore mammea," &c.

and in all we find an exquisite taste, a spirit that even in old age was intoxicated with sensual and artistic pleasure, and a profound scepticism that turns everything into ridicule.

In the lyrics, the author's literary genius rises to its highest pitch, and shows us even better than those of Poliziano the image of the Renaissance. His women, says Carducci, laughingly bare all their charms to the sun and to love. "And with his tranquil sense of voluptuousness and genuine enjoyment of life, Pontano, though writing in Latin, is the most modern and truest poet of his age and of his country."[1] Assuredly, in reading his Odes, it is admirable to see the ease and agility of his movements in Latin attire; he resembles a swimmer floating down with the current. His Neapolitan Italian seems to infuse new life into the old idiom, even when it changes it too much:—

> "Amabo mea chara Fanniella,
> Ocellus Veneris, decusque amoris,
> Jube isthaec tibi basiem labella
> Succiplena, tenella, mollicella,
> Amabo, mea vita, suaviumque,
> Face istam mihi gratiam petenti."[2]

He laughs and jests, sings lullabies, steeps himself in voluptuous beauty, between the soft arms of the nymphs who, surrounded by flowers, await him on the seashore, in the presence of nature. This is his world, the world of the Renaissance. All the cities, villas, and islands in the neighbourhood of Naples, the streets, and the fountains, personified in fantastic beings, move and dance around the poet. The nymphs Posilipo, Mergellina, Afragola,

[1] Carducci, "Studi letterarii," Livorno, 1874, p. 97.
[2] Among the verses reprinted by Tallarigo, *op. cit.*, vol. ii. p. 627.

Sforza, and the youthful bride of Alfonso II of Aragon, a bc
of tales, many of which are very obscene, and certain of wh
bear special dedications to this or that noble lady.

From the Dialogues of Pontano and the Tales of Masuccio,
great leap is required to pass on to the poems of knight-errant
another species of literature peculiar to the age. Truly th
had their birth in France, and may appear totally opposed to
national genius of Italy. Chivalry, in fact, was hardly at
diffused among us; feudalism had been opposed and in a gr
measure destroyed; in the Crusades we had only played
secondary part; Charlemagne, the national hero of France,
for us merely a foreign prince and a conqueror. Yet these subj
were substantial elements of the poems of chivalry. The religi
scepticism, that early arose in Italy, was also opposed to
temper of poems chiefly founded on the wars of the Christi
against the infidels. Neither was the marvellous, which is
very essence of these poems, adapted to the temper of Itali
with their constant admiration for classical beauty. Hav
passed at one stride from a state of decay to a new form
civilization, they had never known the savage and robust yo
in which had been created that world of heroes, with their
possible adventures and fantastic, ever-changing natures. Ne
theless, these French poems so rapidly diffused throughout
feudal Europe, found their way to us also, and were much n
widely propagated than might have been expected.

Even before the rise of our literature, and when in the n
of Italy many wrote in Provençal or French, we had a serie
knightly poems, compiled by Italians, in an Italianized Frencl
Frenchified Italian. In the South these tales were brought t
by the Normans, and in the centre of the Peninsula were sp
by means of Italian writings and wandering minstrels. But t
knightly heroes, the growth of a mist of fantasy, that
thoroughly outlandish, fell upon barren soil here, particularl
Central Italy, and had almost vanished from our literature to
refuge in mountain cottages and the hovels of the poor, wher
sun of Dante's verse rose above the horizon. In many of
caccio's works, in Petrarch's "Trionfi," even in the "Di
Commedia," we often meet with reminiscences showing that
romances of chivalry had been always well known among
people. Paolo and Francesca in the "Inferno" remind
other how, in happy times, they had read together of
loves of Launcelot; and Sacchetti telling of the smith
spoilt Dante's verses in reciting them, and the harshness
which the poet reproved him, adds that the smith would

tales, which are worthy of notice, especially if we remember, that after Sacchetti, that style of composition was almost entirely forsaken. A man of the world and destitute of learning, though living in the company of the learned, Masuccio Salernitano tells us, that it was his endeavour to imitate "the ancient satirist Juvenal, and the much esteemed idiom and style of the well-famed poet Boccaccio."[1] He frequently invokes the immortal Deities, and the most eloquent god Mercury speaks to him of the deceits practised by women "upon our great father Jove, the radiant Apollo, ourselves and other gods."[2] He, like Sacchetti, declares that he will narrate tales "approved as authentic histories, and certain modern, and other not very ancient facts."[3] His language is very artificial, from his imitation of Latin and of the Decameron; and a great admixture of the Neapolitan and Salernitan dialects, while lending much vivacity to Masuccio's style, impairs both his Italian and his grammar. His freshness and graphic power are so considerable, that were his style less incorrect, he would be one of our standard authors. Even as it is, the "Novellino" gives us a faithful representation of the times and of the Neapolitan Court. With a wide knowledge of men and things, with an intelligence that appears to be keen and good, the author knows how to give life to his characters, and can narrate with the ease and cheerful ingenuity of a true writer of the Renaissance. His dominant feeling is a profound hatred for the immorality of the priesthood, whom he scourges pitilessly, without, however, showing any hostility to religion. In the Exordium to the third tale dedicated to Pontano, he lauds his virtues, while lamenting that they should be contaminated by his constant intercourse with priests, friars, and nuns, "since with such persons only usurers, fornicators, and men of bad life are seen to converse." All this is not very surprising in a writer resident at the Aragonese Court, which was in continual warfare with the papacy, and had taken under its protection Antonio Panormita and Lorenzo Valla. But it is a surprising sign of the times, to find dedicated to Ippolita, the daughter of Francesco

[1] "Il Novellino di Masuccio Salernitano, restituito alla sua antica lezione," by Luigi Settembrini: Naples, Morano, 1874 See the prologue to the third part. There are fifty tales divided into five parts. Each part begins with a prologue, and the first of them is addressed to Ippolita d'Aragona, to whom the book is dedicated. Each tale has an Exordium, dedicating it to some illustrious Neapolitan personage; the tale itself follows, and then comes a conclusion always entitled "Masuccio," because in it the author sets forth his reflections. The little we know of Masuccio is to be found in the Discourse, with which Settembrini has prefaced the volume.

[2] Prologue to the third part.

[3] First prologue.

without, however, making either a true history or a genuine romance of chivalry. He tries to introduce connection and precision in the midst of a deplorable chaos; he makes geographical corrections; arranges genealogies; but in so doing, sacrifices ingenuousness and poetic originality. It seems as though the Italian realism, so much admired in those stories, which are the most characteristic and national outcome of our literature, predominates even here, and spoils the romance, making it, despite certain merits, a hybrid work.

It is, in truth, neither popular nor literary poetry; but rather epic matter in course of transformation, seeking a new shape which it has not yet found. The spoken language is intermingled with classical reminiscences, then familiar to all Italians; narrative has a quiet solemnity, almost in the style of Livy, and the author tries to fuse together within the limits of an ideal and well defined machinery, a myriad of tales which had originally sprouted up with the exuberant and disorderly fertility of a virgin forest.[1] These qualities of Mangabotti's writings are common to those of numerous other compilers of prose and verse

From all that we have said, it is plain that when our men of letters began once more to write in Italian, and drew nearer to the people, sated with the pompous rhetoric of poems like the Sforziade and the Berseide, they found together with the "Rispetti" and the "Ballate," many diffuse narratives like the "Reali di Francia," in verse and in prose. Upon these they exercised their powers, endeavouring to convert them into true works of art. They left intact the general machinery of the tale, the division into cantos, the recapitulations at the beginning of each, addressed to "friends and good people," by the popular poet, who was, as it were obliged to make an independent work of every canto. And these new writers also were accustomed to read their tales in fragments, not, it is true, in the public

[1] Among the works giving precise details of this part of our literary history, we should first quote the memoir read in the Berlin Academy of L. Ranke, "Zur Geschichte der italienischen Poesie," Berlin, 1837. This short composition is one of those that first opened a new path in the history of the Romance of chivalry; although it is no longer on a level with the present state of our knowledge. More ample and with many new investigations in the history of literature, particularly that of France, but in some degree also that of Italy, is the work of Mons G. Paris, "Histoire Poétique di Charles Magne," Paris, A. Franck, 1865. As regards our literature, the most recent and complete work is that of Professor P. Raina, "Ricerche intorno ai Reali di Francia," Bologna, Romagnoli, 1872 (in the collection published by the Commission for *testi di lingua*). In this book and in other writings published in the "Propugnatore," Professor Raina shows a profound knowledge of his subject, often obtained from fresh sources discovered by himself. See also Carducci's "Scritti letterarii," Leghorn, 1874.

done better to keep to the songs of Tristan and Launcelot; an evident sign that even in Florence these songs were considered more adapted to the popular fancy. Then, when the learned began to write in Latin, the romances of chivalry seemed to awake from a temporary trance, and together with the "Rispetti," "Strambotti," "Laudi," and "Mysteries," formed part of what, as we have seen, was the literature of the people. In fact, so widely and deeply were they diffused, that, to this day, the Neapolitan story-teller (*cantastorie*) relates the feats of Orlando and Rinaldo to an enchanted audience, and in the rural districts of Tuscany the *Maggi*, or May plays, performed among the peasantry in the spring, take their subjects from the same poems. Some of these *Maggi* and romantic tales are of recent composition, but not a few of them date from the fifteenth century. At that time they were produced in enormous numbers, and read with the same avidity as novels are now-a-days. The Italians neither created new poems nor exactly reproduced the old, but made compilations in verse or prose, generally the latter, in which they often fused many into one, thus forming a huge repertory of fantastic tales. These, the story-tellers, who were generally authors themselves, went about reading to the people in town and country, and were everywhere listened to with the most eager attention. The so-called Chronicle of Turpin, and the cycle of Charlemagne in general furnish the groundwork of the Italian fables; but the cycle of King Arthur and the Round Table have also great part in them. The chief of these compilers, and who will suffice to give us an idea of the rest, lived in the second half of the fourteenth and beginning of the fifteenth century. This was Andrea dei Mangabotti of Barberino in the Val d' Elsa, who calls Florence *my city*, because he lived and was educated there. Of unrivalled industry, he not only wrote the famous "Reali di Francia" in six books, but also "Aspromonte," in three books, "Storia di Rinaldo," in seven, "Spagna," in one, the "Seconda Spagna," in one, the "Storie Narbonesi," in seven, "Aiolfo," in one very stout book, "Ugone d'Avernia," in three, and, finally, "Guerino il Meschino," which although a continuation of the events narrated in the "Aspromonte," forms a separate work, the popularity of which, little inferior to that of the "Reali," endures to the present day. All these works are in prose, excepting certain portions of "Ugone d'Avernia."

The object proposed by the author was the collection and arrangement of the great multitude of tales forming part of the cycle of Charlemagne. And thus in the "Reali," his principal work, he compiled the history of the great emperor's race

plays round the author's lips, for he is himself exhilarated by the spell of illusion under which he holds his readers, and appears to laugh at them, the better to dominate and stir their hearts. It is a great mistake to imagine that any satire or profound irony exists in these romances. But as the poet himself cannot believe seriously in his personages, he is content to make his tale a vehicle for expressing all the various turns of life, all the contradictions existing in his own mind, in an age so full of different and antagonistic elements, content to delight and be delighted by his own creations. Still it needs an artistic temperament thoroughly to appreciate the value of these poems, which are most enjoyable when read in bits, as the story-tellers used to read them to the people, as Pulci, Boiardo, and Ariosto read them to an audience of friends and patrons.

The first of these poems, worthy to be called a work of art, is the "Morgante Maggiore" of Luigi Pulci (born at Florence in 1431). This work is a compound of other older ones. The first twenty-three cantos reproduce, with more or less fidelity, one of these poems which the story-tellers used to read to the people, narrating the adventures of Orlando. The last five tell the tale of the rout of Roncesvalle instead, and are made up of two other popular compilations, entitled "La Spagna." An interval of twenty-five or thirty years passes between one part of the Morgante and the other; so that the characters who were young in the first are old in the second, a circumstance of little weight with the author.[1] Nor does he hesitate, specially in the first part, to follow his model so closely—merely correcting or modifying some of the stanzas—as to appear a positive plagiarist.[2]

[1] See Professor P. Rajna's two very important works upon this subject: "La materia del Morgante Maggiore in un ignoto poema cavalleresco del secolo," xv. ("Propugnatore," iii. year, 5th and 6th Nos.; iv. year, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th Nos.)

[2] I quote at hazard a few stanzas of the many given by Rajna ("Propugnatore," ii year, 1st. No., pp. 31-33):

"Quando più fiso la notte dormia
Una brigata s' armò di pagani,
E un di quegli la camera apria,
E poi entraron ne' luoghi lontani,
E un di lor ch'è pien di gagliardia
Al conte Orlando legava le mani
Con buon legami per tanta virtute,
Ch'atar non si può dalle genti argute."
("Orlando," foglio 92.)

"Quando più fiso la notte dormia
Una brigata s'armar di pagani,

squares, but at Court, at the dinners of the nobility, to cultivated persons, who, however, desired entertainment, and were weary of the empty solemnity of the learned men. Frequently the changes made in rewriting these popular poems, as we may now call them, were confined to a few touches, the addition of new episodes, fresh descriptions, sometimes of entire cantos. But the art of infusing life where none was before, consisted precisely in these re-touches, which opened the way to new and original creation.

The personages of these tales and poems began to stand out from the still fantastic and nebulous background with which they had hitherto been confused, and to assume life and consistency; the descriptions of nature were fragrant as it were with the breath of spring, and that which still remained of their primitive form, helped to enhance the truth, and we might say, the youthfulness of all that was now presented in a new shape. It was almost an improvised rebellion against all conventional rhetoric, all artificial trammels; the Italian spirit was as a man who again breathes the fresh air of fields and mountains after long confinement in an unwholesome atmosphere. To seek for depth of feeling, logical development of character, or a general and philosophic design in these poems, would be to expect the improbable and impossible. On the contrary, the author of those days often purposely disarranges the monotonous narration of the romances which he finds already compiled, mingles and re-orders at his own caprice the intricate threads of the vast woof, in order the better to keep alive the curiosity of his readers. The important point for him is to be the master of his heroes, so that they may always stand out vividly at the moment when he summons them on the stage. The ideal he pursues is different from ours, he has no desire to sound the depths of the human heart; his object is to depict the changeful reality of all passing events and things.

If again and again he dismisses his personages into the obscurity of the fantastic background he has given to his picture, it is only to complete our illusion, and make us better appreciate truth and reality when once more he brings them near to us, presenting them almost like those baby boys of Correggio, who thrust forth their heads between flower-laden branches, or like those on the walls of the Vatican who seem to move amid a labyrinth of graceful arabesques. Thus, although the author is continually telling us of monsters, fairies, enchantments, and magic philters, his narrative has so much life, that we seem to be reading a history of real events. Still, as is very natural, a perpetual smile

Yet it is these slight and simple touches of a master hand, which change a vulgar work into a work of art, give life and relief to the characters, and lead us away from tricks of rhetoric into the presence of nature Now and then, however, the poet forgets his original, and then we have, for instance, the 275 stanzas narrating the episode of Morgante and Margutte, resplendent with all the careless scepticism, rich fancy, and pungent irony for which Pulci[1] was renowned. This poem, which at every step breaks the leading thread of the narrative, seems only to acquire unity from the clear, definite, and graphic precision of its ever-changing and inexhaustible string of episodes. It is a strange hurly-burly of incidents: of pathetic, ridiculous, marvellous and jovial scenes. The elements constituting the culture of that age, Paganism and Christianity, scepticism and superstition, irony and artistic enthusiasm for the beauties of nature, here co-exist, and without the need of any effort at agreement seem to harmonize with one another, exactly because the poet's sole object is to reproduce the restless changes of natural events and the realities of life. Pulci is an unrivalled tale-teller; his irony is directed, like that of the novelists, against priests and friars, occasionally against religion itself,[2] but always in a manner to imply that he intends

E un di questi la camera apria:
Corsongli addosso come lupi o cani;
Orlando a tempo non si risentia,
Che finalmente gli legâr le mani;
E fu menato subito in prigione,
Senza ascoltarlo o dirgli la cagione."
("Morgante," xii 88.)

"Tu sei colei che tutte l' altra avanza,
Tu se' d' ogni beltà ricco tesoro;
Tu se' colei che mi togli baldanza,
Tu se' la luce e specchio del mio cuore," &c.
("Orlando," foglio 114.)

"Tu se' colei ch 'ogni altra bella avanza,
Tu se' di nobiltà ricco tesoro,
Tu se' colei che mi dài tal baldanza,
Tu se' la luce dello eterno coro," &c.
("Morgante," xiv. 47)

[1] This episode was afterwards printed separately with the title of "Morgante Minore," whence the addition of "Maggiore" to the title of the entire poem which the author had simply styled "Il Morgante."

[2] The following well-known verses give a good idea of Pulci's pungent, laughable and sceptical style:

"Rispose allor Margutte: A dirtel tosto,
Io non credo più al nero che all' azzurro,

place. Probably this dispute arose from his being of a Reggio family, born at Scandiano, educated at Ferrara.[1] A learned writer of Latin eclogues, and translations from the Greek, he was both of noble birth and noble character; he lived in the society of the Este family, but had no liking for Court life, inasmuch as he wrote:

> "Ogni servir di cortigiano
> La sera è grato e la mattina è vano."

He was first Governor of Modena, and then of Reggio—Emilia; he also filled other important offices; but while honourably fulfilling every duty, his mind turned more willingly to meditation upon heroes and romances of chivalry than to political and administrative details. It is related of him, that one day as he wandered in the fields, racking his brains to find a name for one of his heroes, it suddenly occurred to him to call him Rodomonte, and so great was his delight, that he ran back to Scandiano as fast as he could, and ordered all the bells to be set ringing. He had a sincere belief in chivalry, and hoped to see it revived in Italy. For the framework of his poem he made use of tales belonging to different cycles. A fervent admirer of the Round Table, he mingled Arthur's heroes with those of Charlemagne, for in his opinion the former monarch was the grander of the two, since, unlike Charles, his heart was not closed to that source of all greatness, the passion of love. In fact

gaiety. Among the former's Sonnets is one giving a good idea of its author, beginning:

> "Costor, che fan si gran disputazione
> Dell' anima, ond' ell' entri o ond 'ell 'esca,
> O come il nocciol si stia nella pesca,
> Hanno studiato in su n' un gran mellone," &c.
> (Sonetto cxlv. p 145)

The viii. Sonnet—

> "Ah, ah, ah, ah sa' di quel ch' io rido;"

The lv.—

> "Don, don, che diavol fia? A parlamento;"

The lxi.—

> "Chiarissimo maggior dite su presto,"

and many others are by Franco, and afford good proof how he strove to rival Pulci in the attainment of ease and skill. In the same volume at p. 151 we have Luigi Pulci's "Confessione a Maria Vergine." In this the *ungrateful sinner* confesses his sins, and acknowledges past errors—

> "Però qui le mie colpe scrivo e 'ncarno
> Con le lacrime miste con l' inchiostro;"

naturally this was no obstacle to his committing still worse sins the following day.

[1] This is likewise the opinion of Professor Ulisse Poggi in his short "Elogio di Matteo Maria Boiardo," published in the Supplement to No. 35 of the "Italia Centrale" of Reggio (Emilia), March 23, 1871.

reaching Mecca, he would send Lorenzo verses in the Moorish tongue, and many others from hell itself by means of some familiar spirit.[1] Then he goes on to say, "Do not, in the height of your felicity, allow your friends to be driven and worried like dogs. Much I fear that when I do not send thee verses, all I write to thee in prose is unwillingly read, and hastily cast aside.[2] Lorenzo was always the same, he patronized all, but had no real affection for any one, not even for those who like Pulci had been the companions of his childhood, and loved him as a brother. Later, however, the author of the Morgante was commissioned by him to arrange affairs of some gravity at various Italian Courts, and even in these circumstances his letters always show the bent of his genius, often appearing like fragments of his poem turned into prose.

The 20th of May, 1472, he wrote from Fuligno that he had been to Rome, "to visit the daughter of the despot of the Maremma, that is to say of the Morea. . . . I will therefore briefly describe this mountain of grease that we visited, the like of which I did not think could have existed, in all Germany, much less in Sardinia. We came to a room where this pudding (*berlingaccio*), was set up in a chair, and she had wherewithal to sit, that I can tell you. Two Turkish kettledrums for her bosom, a double chin, a broad, shining face, a pair of hog's chaps, a throat sunk between the drums. Two eyes, big enough for four, with so much flesh, and fat, and grease around, that the Po itself has smaller banks."[3] In Pulci's poems this extremely familiar style becomes much more elegant, without losing its spontaneity, as is also to be seen by his sonnets, which correct the too common, often low, manner of the poor barber Burchiello, in whose shop according to his own phrase—

"Poetry with the razor fights."

Pulci at that time wrote in emulation of Matteo Franco, with whom he exchanged all kinds of pleasantries, obscenities, and insolence, as a simple pastime, turning his sonnets into a species of rhymed dialogue, full of the spontaneous simplicity, which was now the chief aim of the new literature.[4]

One year earlier than Luigi Pulci, Matteo Maria Boiardo was born, and three cities contested the honour of being his birth-

[1] Letter iii. [2] Letter iv. [3] Letter xxi.

[4] "Sonetti" of Matteo Franco and Luigi Pulci published in 1759. Franco has much dash and spontaneousness; but Pulci is the better poet and has more

arrival of Orlando, the French prevent the Saracens from entering Paris. Then shortly before his death, which took place on the night of the December 20, 1494, he beheld the French pass the Alps, and his pen dropped from his hand for ever, leaving the thread of his poem interrupted by that celebrated stanza beginning:—

> "Mentre ch' io canto, oh Dio redentore!
> Vedo la Italia tutta, a fiamma, a foco,
> Per questi Galli che con gran furore
> Vengon per disertar non so che loco . . ."

Although the merits of the "Orlando Inamorato" are so many and so great, that Berni set to work to re-cast it in another shape, and Ariosto continued it in his "Orlando Furioso;" yet its want of polish, and the incorrectness of its diction, often degraded into the Ferrarese dialect, prevented it from becoming really popular, or acquiring the fame so well deserved by the intellect and character of its author, notwithstanding his lack of Tuscan atticism. He too was a classic scholar, but so thoroughly immersed in his fantastic world, that whenever the images and heroes of antiquity presented themselves to his mind, he always compared them to those of chivalry, with which he was more familiar.

Ariosto, also a native of Ferrara, was the first who was able to conquer the obstacle of a non-Tuscan birth, and it was in his writings that our tongue finally became Italian. Gifted with the true genius of style and the faculty of the patient labour of the file; by means of art he attained to a marvellous spontaneity, and opened the way for future followers. Much less learned than Boiardo, and ignorant of Greek, he had nevertheless a far more lively sense of classic beauty. Contrary to his precedessor's custom, he prefers to compare his heroes of chivalry with the personages of the Pagan world. His knights-errant have the wisdom of Nestor, the cunning of Ulysses, the courage of Achilles; his women are as beautiful as though chiselled by Phidias, they have the seductions of Venus combined with the wisdom of Minerva. Ariosto is always returning to his Virgil and his Ovid; but as Ranke has observed, he seems to recur to them in order by force of imagination to lead them back to the primitive Homer. And with more resemblance to Pulci than to Boiardo, he gives little attention to plot, *ensemble* or unity of incident; but rather seeks to depict the fugitive moments of changeful reality, and describe individual passions. The events of his own life and times are introduced into the poem in a sufficiently transparent fashion, and they sometimes seem to exist even where they are not, so great is the poet's graphic power. Therefore, although the

his Orlando is a hero whose virtue finds in love its first origin and its final reward. Many episodes are from beginning to end of Boiardo's own creation, for he lived and breathed in the world evolved from his own fancy, with an ingenuousness which is at once his chief merit and his chief fault. It renders him more touching, more sincere; but naturally the fact of his relating impossible adventures in all seriousness, and without any shade of irony, renders him far less modern than Pulci. The latter brings out better the individuality of his personages; while Boiardo is more successful is describing the general tumult of fantastic events, in which, however, his heroes are often involved to a degree that clouds the precision of their outline. Too often is love renewed or extinguished by enchanted beverages; victory or death given by enchanted weapons. Pulci seeks psychological truth even amid the spells of magic; Boiardo even amidst reality invokes the fantastic and the supernatural. But to recompense us for this, there is always something noble and generous in his heroes, and throughout his poem, that is lacking in other authors. He praises and sincerely admires virtue, exalting the consolations which friendship affords to noble minds:

> "Potendo palesar l' un l' altro il core,
> E ogni dubbio che accada raro o spesso
> Poterlo ad altrui dir come a se stesso"[1]

It is true that there is some amount of coarseness and indecent jesting in the "Orlando"; but these things are to be found in the poem, because we find them in life. And there is always a background of moral seriousness, which gives singular elevation to Boiardo's noble diction, especially when compared with that continual ridicule of all things which predominates in the other writers of the time. Here we have a world full of variety, of imagination, of affection, and it is in this world that the poet lives, wrapt in illusion. But this illusion was destined to be of short duration. It is in vain that he tells us:—

> "E torna il mondo di virtù fiorito;"

while all things were hastening to ruin. Too soon he himself is driven to acknowledge it; and at the end of the second book his melancholy breaks out:—

> "Sentendo Italia di lamenti piena,
> Non che ora canti, ma sospiro appena."

He again took up his work, and reached the point, in which, by the

[1] Boiardo, "Orlando Inamorato," book iii. canto vii.

mediæval world that he had destroyed, and those of th antiquity which he had exhumed, were falling around him on a sides, before he could discover the generative principle of a ne world, or could convert into genuine organic material all th remains of the past.

Whether it be that the Italians, after having created the gran entities of Pagan Rome and Catholic Rome, had lost all capacit for forming a new order of society, founded solely on the fre modern individualism, for which they had not only opened th way, but which they had even initiated by their labours ; wheth it be that foreign invasions had arrested their progress on th road, certain it is that they often appear as if bewildered and u certain of themselves. While daringly denying God, they belie in fate and fortune ;[1] while despising all religion, they study th occult sciences with ardour. Almost every republic, every princ every Condottiere owned an astrologer, without whose counsel n treaty was signed, no war commenced. Cristoforo Landino an Battista Mantovano drew the horoscopes of religions ; Guiccia dini and Machiavelli believed in spirits of the air ; Lodovico Moro, notwithstanding his unbounded belief in his own sagacit took no step without previous consultation with his astrologe Reason, in trying to explain all things, found itself confronted b its own impotence.

The feeling for the beautiful seemed to be the only and sure guide of human life which sought to identify itself with art. Castiglione's "Cortegiano" we are shown to how high a point refinement and culture the *gentleman* of the sixteenth centu could attain ; but we are also shown the weak foundation of h moral conscience. Virtue, if not the natural result of a hap temperament, is only to be prized because it is in itself pleasa gracious and elegant, to use the phrase of Pandolfini. Gre indeed must have been the intellectual and even the mor qualities of Italians, if in so tremendous a confusion they not on escaped total ruin, but gave a powerful impulse to art, science a the social conditions of life. Besides, this was a period of tran tion and restless mutability, of which it is hard to form an accura judgment, unless we consider it as a consequence of the past, a a necessary preparation for the future Suddenly foreign inv sions strangled our whole political life, and thus the Itali

[1] This faith in fortune is sometimes shown in a singular manner. In the boo of the "Provvisioni" of the Florentine Republic, there is one dated February 2 (Old Style) beginning with the usual formula : *In Dei nomine : Amen*, and wit the large capital I are written the following words : *Fortuna in omni re domin* Florentine Archives, "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," Register 190, sheet 122

"Orlando Furioso" continues the history of "Orlando Inamorato," it has more literary connection with the "Morgante" of Pulci, who, much as he availed himself of preceding writers, may be called the creator of this description of poem. But Ariosto extends beyond the period to which we have hitherto dedicated our attention, so we can say no more. Nevertheless we may observe in conclusion, that even from the days of the "Divine Comedy" and the "Decameron," Italian literature had begun to arouse the human mind from the mists of the Middle Ages, and lead it back towards reality. Alike in poetry and prose, it had always sought for nature and mankind. Arrested in its course by the political disorder and social decay which subverted all things in the middle of the fourteenth century, it sought the aid of antiquity, in order to continue the same path. And thus after the middle of the fifteenth century we behold the same realism come still more clearly to the surface, not only in letters, but in science, in society, in mankind. It was indeed the impulse to study and know the world, free from all bonds of authority or prejudice, which created the new literature, the new science, initiated the experimental method, spurred men to the most daring voyages, and reanimated, as with a second life, the whole mind of Italy. And what renders this marvellous is the fact that it happened during a thorough upheaval of society, which, in the midst of corruption and decay, gave birth to the grand elements of modern culture.

At that time all distinctions of caste, of class, nay even of sex, seemed to have utterly vanished. Mæcenas and his *protégés*, in conversing on letters or science, treated one another on terms of equality, and addressed one another with the familiar thee and thou; women studied Latin, Greek and philosophy, sometimes governed states, and clad in armour, followed Condottieri to the field. To us it causes an astonishment almost amounting to disgust and horror to hear indecent talk carried on in the presence, not only of refined matrons, but of innocent girls; to hear politics treated as though no such thing as conscience were known. The man of the Renaissance considered that all that he dared to do might be freely talked of, discussed and described without the slightest scruple And this was a necessity of his observant and inquiring mind, not always in consequence of his corruption, often, on the contrary, in consequence of his realism. He appeared to live in an Olympian calm, always master of himself, always wearing an ironical smile; but it was a deceptive calm. He suffered from the want of harmony and balance between the emptiness of his heart and the feverish activity of his brain, which often raved as in an unconscious delirium. The ruins of the



IV.

POLITICAL CONDITION OF ITALY AT THE END OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

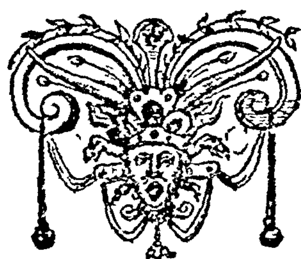
1. The Election of Pope Alexander VI.

THE nearer the fifteenth century approached to its end, the more inevitable became the catastrophe already foreseen for many years. When Galeazzo Maria Visconti was assassinated at Milan (1476), his son, Giovan Galeazzo, was only eight years of age, and his mother, Bona di Savoia, therefore assumed the regency. But the brothers of her deceased husband conspired against her, and finally Lodovico il Moro, Duke of Bari, the most able and ambitious one among them, took possession of the government. His first act was to separate the Duchess from her faithful counsellor, Cicco Simonetta, who was put to death;[1] he then separated her from her child, at that time only twelve years of age, and persuaded the latter to sign a deed, choosing himself, the usurper, for his guardian (1480) The Duchess left the Court, and Lodovico remained *de facto* lord of Milan, but, having no legal right to his position, was continually environed by a thousand dangers. In 1485 he had a narrow escape from a conspiracy. In 1489 Giovan Galeazzo, then twenty-one years old, married

[1] He was then seventy years of age, and the following verses were inscribed to him:—

> "Dum fidus servare volo patriamque Ducemque,
> Multorum insidiis proditus interii.
> Ille sed immensa celebrari laude meretur
> Qui mavult vita quam caruisse fide."

Renaissance, with all its uncertainties, all its contradictions, is, as it were, instantaneously turned into stone before our eyes. And possibly this is exactly the reason of its eminent instructiveness. In it we see the anatomy of the past bared before us, we behold the origin of modern society, and even discover the earliest germs of many of our national defects.



devour us if we do not escape in time." The day after the election, all Rome repeated that four mules laden with gold had been seen carrying to the house of Ascanio Sforza the price of his vote. At all events it is certain that on the very day of his consecration (26th of August), under the name of Alexander VI., the new Pope nominated Sforza Vice-Chancellor of the Church—a very lucrative office—and also gave him his own palace, now the Sforza Cesarini, with all that it contained. Estates, offices, and generous incomes were lavished upon the other Cardinals; since, with five exceptions, every vote in the Conclave had been obtained by purchase.

Alexander VI is so prominent a figure in Italian history, the name of Borgia arouses so much horror, recalls so many tragedies, and is so often involved with the main subject of these volumes, that it is necessary to speak both of the Pope and of his children. At this period the offspring of a Pope were no longer styled his nephews Roderigo Borgia, born the 1st of January, 1431, at Xativa near Valencia, was the nephew of Calixtus III. who had raised him to the rank of bishop, cardinal and Vice-Chancellor of the Church, with an allowance of 8,000 florins per annum. He had studied law at Bologna, was well-practised in affairs, and although not always able to keep his passions under control, and apt to let people see what he thought, could become, on emergencies, a perfect dissembler. He was neither a man of much energy, nor of determined will; both by nature and habit he was doubled-faced and double-minded, and the ambassadors of the Italian States frequently allude to him as "of a mean nature," "*di natura vile*."[1]

The firmness and energy wanting to his character were, however, often replaced by the constancy of his evil passions, by which he was almost blinded. Always smiling and tranquil, with an air of ingenuous expansiveness, he liked to lead a merry life, was temperate, even frugal at table, and perhaps for that reason, remained very fresh and robust even in his old age. Extremely covetous of gold, he sought to obtain it by every means, and spent it with lavish profusion. His ruling passion was lust for women; he ardently loved the children he had by them, and neglected no means for augmenting their wealth and

[1] Guidantonio Vespucci and Piero Capponi wrote from Lyons the 6th of June, 1494, to Piero dei Medici who had sent them on an embassy to France: "Our Lord, His Holiness, who has a vile nature and is *conscius criminis sui*," &c., Desjardins, "Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane," vol. i. p. 399 Ferrante d'Aragona, in a letter of the 17th January, 1494, which will be quoted farther on, speaks of the Pope as a man of "acute and timid nature."

Isabella of Aragon, daughter of Alfonso, Duke of Calabria, and thus, partly in consequence of his manhood, partly from the impatience of his wife, who sought and hoped for the aid of her grandfather in Naples, the state of affairs became dangerous.

In 1491 Lodovico il Moro married Beatrice d'Este, and feminine impatience and jealousies still further embittered men's minds, and fostered discontent. Tormented by continual fears, the restless spirit of the man, who was ever ready to turn all Italy upside down, rather than renounce his ill-acquired power, was always brooding over new schemes. At present his favourite design was that of calling the French to aid him against the Neapolitan king, since, by this means, he hoped to stir up a general war, in the midst of which his subtlety, in which he had unlimited trust, would enable him to arrange his own concerns at the expense of both friends and enemies. It was very doubtful whether he would be successful in this; but it was easy enough to bring about a general war, and a foreign invasion. In fact, it was only the great sagacity and tenaciousness of Lorenzo dei Medici that could preserve the general equilibrium and prevent the sudden outbreak of the catastrophe. For these reasons the year 1492 was fatal for Italy. Lorenzo died on the 8th of April, and was succeeded by his son Piero, a man of vain, presumptuous, frivolous character, who passed his time playing at football and the game of pallone, and was totally incapable of governing Tuscany, much less of exercising any influence over Italy. Nor did this misfortune come alone, for on the 25th of July, Innocent VIII. died, and was succeeded by the worst Pontiff who ever filled the chair of St. Peter—a man whose crimes were sufficient to convulse any human society.

No sooner did the Conclave meet on the 6th of August than one might have imagined it assembled for a game of speculation rather than for the election of a Pope, so plain was the corruption exercised on the voters. From all parts of Europe money poured into the hands of Roman bankers, in favour of this man or that of the three candidates engaged in the race. France supported Giuliano della Rovere, Lodovico il Moro his brother Ascanio, and these two seemed to have the best chances of success. But Roderigo Borgia, by means of his great wealth and lavish promises, was enabled to add to the votes he had already won, all those promised to Ascanio, as soon as the chances began to turn against the latter; and in this way he gained his election. On the night of the 10th of August he exclaimed in a frenzy of joy:—"I am Pope, Pontiff, Vicar of Christ!" and Cardinal Giovanni dei Medici whispered in the ear of his neighbour, Cardinal Cibo:—"We are in the jaws of the wolf, and he will

mother of his children, upon whom he heaped enormous sums of money and every kind of benefit. Thus Vannozza remained in the background, and had no share in the tragic events so soon to take place. Borgia had entrusted his favourite daughter Lucrezia to the care of a relation, Adriana De Mila,[1] who was also the closest confidant of his scandalous intrigues. The widow of Lodovico Orsini since 1489, she had about the same time married her son, Orsino Orsini, to the famous Giulia Farnese, who, fair as Lucrezia, was by reason of her great beauty known as the beautiful Giulia. This young lady was barely fifteen years old when she had already attracted the admiration of the Cardinal, who became her declared lover, on his desertion of Vannozza. Even in this intrigue he was assisted by Adriana.

Such was the state of things when Borgia became Pope. His consecration was celebrated with unusual festivities on the 26th of August, and the Eternal City overflowed with flowers, draperies and triumphal arches, allegorical and mythological statues, and inscriptions, one of which ran as follows:

> "Caesare magna fuit, nunc Roma est maxima, Sextus
> Regnat Alexander, ille vir, iste Deus."[2]

This election aroused no alarm in any one excepting those who knew Borgia well, like Cardinal Medici and Ferrante d'Aragona, a keen-witted prince, who remembered the ingratitude of Calixtus III. towards the house of Aragon;[3] the rest of the world was disposed to hope rather than fear. The scandalous life of the new Pope was not unknown; but what prelates were then without mistresses and children? At first all went smoothly; salaries were regularly paid, administration was carried on in an orderly fashion, necessities of life diminished in price;

[1] His second cousin

[2] Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia," vol. i. pp. 22, 23, 36, 37.

[3] Guicciardini, who was a bitter enemy of the Borgia, tells us in his "Storia d Italia," that Ferrante's alarm at this election, caused him to shed tears, in him a most unusual demonstration. Gregorovius, on the contrary, asserts that the official letters of congratulation prove that none of the Italian states was at first displeased with the election But perhaps in this, as in many other cases, there is some truth in either theory, and Reumont is of the same opinion (*vide* his article on the "Codice Aragonese," in the "Archivio Storico," 3rd series, vol. xiv pp 375-421) It is undoubted that the king of Naples opposed the election of Alexander VI. In the November of 92, the Florentine Ambassador, Piero Alamanni, wrote to Piero dei Medici from Naples, that the Pope was aware how much the king had tried to prevent his election; "and the Pope being the man he is, the king does not persuade himself that this will be easily forgotten by him" *Vide* Desjardins, "Négociations," vol. i.

position. And this was the chief cause of his crimes, all of which he committed with a quiet conscience, without scruple, without remorse, almost indeed boasting of them, and never for an hour losing his equanimity or the power of enjoying life. He was, though very young, already a cardinal, living at Sienna, when Pius II. thought it necessary to send him a very severe letter, reproving him for passing his nights in festivity and dancing with ladies as though he were a layman or worse. But this had no effect, for he neither could nor would alter his way of life.[1]

Among the Cardinal's many passions, one of the most lasting was his love for a certain Giovanna or Vannozza dei Cattani (*de Cataneis*), who, born in 1442, became his mistress in 1470, and bore him many children. To cover this scandal, Borgia gave her several husbands, and to the husbands gave offices and coin. The last of those was a learned man, Carlo Canale, of Mantua, to whom Poliziano dedicated his "Orfeo."[2] Yet Borgia made no mystery of the parentage of these children, and openly acknowledged them as his own. There is no doubt that Giovanni, afterwards Duke of Gandia (born 1474); Cesare, afterwards Duke of Valentino (born 1476); Lucrezia (born 1480); Goffredo or Giuffré (born 1481 or 82)[3] were all his children by this Vannozza. Besides these he had also three elder children, Girolamo, Isabella, and Pier Luigi, of whom but little is known, and all that can be said is that very probably the last of these was also by Vannozza. However that may be, after the birth of Giuffré, namely shortly before Borgia's elevation to the Papacy, his passion for Vannozza, who was now over forty years of age, sensibly slackened, although he showed her consideration as the

[1] All this portion of Alexander's life is minutely related by F. Gregorovius and by A. di Reumont in their Histories of Rome. Gregorovius is specially distinguished for his researches regarding the Borgias.

[2] Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia nach Urkunden und Correspondenzen ihrer eigenen Zeit": Stuttgart, Cotta, 1874, vol. i. pp. 21, 22. This work of the illustrious author contains many important documents. It has been translated into Italian by Sig. R. Mariano, and has gone through three editions in Germany.

[3] The latest and most precise notices on the genealogy of the Borgias are to be found in the "Lucrezia Borgia" of F. Gregorovius. But the reader may also consult the two above-mentioned Histories of Rome, the "Saggio di Albero genealogico e di memorie sulla famiglia Borgia" of L. N. Cittadella: Turin, 1872; the "Rassegna bibliografica" upon this work of Cittadella's (not free from errors), published by Baron A. di Reumont in the "Archivio Storico," series iii. vol. xvii. 2nd No. of 1873, p. 318 and fol.; and "La Genealogia dei Borgia, Nota," by Reumont to his own article, 3rd No. p. 509. Mr. Yriarte has thrown some fresh light on the subject in his book, "César Borgia, sa vie, sa captivité, sa mort," vol. ii. (Paris, Rothschild, 1889).

1491, with Giulia Bella, who was then seventeen years old. His daughter Lucrezia, some four years younger, continued to live with Adriana, and received her first education in this atmosphere of corruption. It may easily be imagined, that it was impossible for her to have the culture attributed to her by some writers on the strength of her fluency in many languages[1] It is true that besides Italian, French, and Spanish, which latter was the family language of the Borgia, she also understood Latin and had some superficial knowledge of Greek, probably learnt from the Greek exiles who frequented the Vatican. But among those of her letters which have been preserved, very few are of any importance, and these give no evidence of her boasted culture. As to the mystery of her character, it is better to wait and judge it from known facts. So far the air she breathed was as poisonous as the blood that ran in her veins.

In 1491, when only eleven years old, she was officially betrothed to a Spaniard, and soon after, that contract being dissolved, was engaged at the same time to two other Spaniards, to one of whom, Don Gasparo, Count of Aversa, she was regularly married. But when Alexander ascended the throne of St. Peter, the Pope's daughter could not be satisfied with a similar alliance, the husband was bought off, the bond dissolved, and on the 2nd of February, 1493, Lucrezia Borgia, *virgo incorrupta ætatis jam nubilis existens*, was married to Giovanni Sforza, Lord of Pesaro.[2] The wedding was celebrated in the Vatican; the bride, who had a dowry of 31,000 ducats, received many rich gifts; there was a

[1] In describing the character of Lucrezia Borgia, many writers have been led away by illusions, and often for very futile reasons They have drawn singular conclusions from the expressions used by contemporary historians, such as "Lucrezia was wise and learned," &c But these same expressions are used regarding Giulia Bella and even Valentino. It was a phrase in general use, especially with reference to those who had good manners and managed matters so as to avoid much open scandal. Burckhardt, in relating in his diary, one of Valentino's orgies, the notorious courtezans' supper, begins thus: "In sero fecerunt cœnam cum Duce Valentinense in camera sua, in Palatio Apostolico, quinquaginta meretrices *honestae* cortesanæ nuncupatæ," &c. Less unreasonably, Lucrezia Borgia's general conduct at Ferrara, and the praises showered upon her by Ariosto and others, have been alleged in her defence. We cannot go into the matter here, but will content ourselves with remarking, that even in the biography by F. Gregorovius, there are certain particulars touching her life at Ferrara, much resembling other particulars of her Roman life. Certainly they are few, but Lucrezia had now to do with a husband who bade her remember the fate of Parisina; nor had she any longer the protection of her father. As to Ariosto's praises, he was accustomed to lavish them on many who were undeserving of them.

[2] Natural son of Costanzo, who was the son of Alexander, brother of Francesco Sforza.

even justice was administered with a rigour of which there was the greatest need, for in the short interval between the fatal illness of Innocent VIII., and the coronation of Alexander VI., two hundred and twenty murders had taken place.

Very soon, however, the tiger began to unsheath his claws. The Pope's passion for aggrandizing his relations, especially his children, some of whom he loved to distraction, grew to a blind frenzy, capable of leading him to every excess. At the first consistory held by him (1st September), his nephew Giovanni Borgia, bishop of Monreale, was made Cardinal of Santa Susanna. His favourite son Cæsar, a youth of sixteen, who was studying at Pisa, and had already appeared in Rome, was on the same day consecrated Archbishop of Valencia. As for Giovanni, Duke of Gandia, and Giuffré, the youngest of all, the Pope had conceived vast schemes for their benefit in the kingdom of Naples, and wished to bestow upon the former the fiefs of Cervetri and Anguillara. But this brought about serious complications which greatly exasperated Alexander VI.

No sooner had Innocent VIII. breathed his last, than his son Franceschetto Cibo, conscious of his altered position, had fled to Florence to seek the protection of his brother-in-law Piero dei Medici, and had sold for the sum of 40,000 ducats these same fiefs of Cervetri and Anguillara to Gentil Virginio Orsini, head of that family, who, arrogant as he was powerful, had once threatened to throw Innocent VIII. into the Tiber. It was asserted at the time that Ferrante d' Aragona had advanced the money for the purchase. Hence the fierce and inextinguishable hatred of the Pope towards Ferrante, and even more towards Orsini. In the midst of these disorders, Lodovico the Moor, the better to distinguish his friends from his enemies, proposed that his ambassadors should go to congratulate the new Pontiff, together with those of Naples, Florence, and Venice. The proposal was not accepted, since Piero dei Medici, in order to enjoy the honour of sending an embassy in his own name, induced Ferrante to invent some pretext for refusal. Thereupon Lodovico, believing himself isolated in Italy, took the desperate resolution of appealing to the French.

While the already gloomy horizon was becoming darker and darker, the Holy Father took no decided part, but wavered between this side and that, waiting to see which would be most advantageous to himself and his children. And meanwhile, old as he was, he profited by the interval to plunge into dissipation. The Vannozza was kept away from the Vatican, and he abandoned himself more and more to his intrigue, first begun in

2. The Arrival of Charles VIII. in Italy.

Charles VIII., educated in the study of romance, of chivalry, and histories of the Crusades, his head crammed with fantastic schemes, and without any steadiness of character, was entirely under the influence of two ambitious men, who were always at his side. The first of these, Etienne dei Vesc, had been raised from the position of gentleman-in-waiting to that of Chamberlain and Seneschal of Beaucaire, and thus enriched, was ever greedy for fresh gains ; the other, Guillaume Briçonnet, a rich gentleman of Touraine, having lost his wife, had been nominated Bishop of St. Malo in 1493 ; he aspired to a cardinal's hat, and meanwhile controlled the chief affairs of the State. By means of promises and gold, Lodovico il Moro had gained over both these men. After the marriage of Lucrezia Borgia to the Lord of Pesaro, one of the Sforza family, the Duke knew that his power in Rome was increased by the presence there of his brother, Cardinal Ascanio. He was now treating simultaneously with all the Italian potentates, for his secret intention was—after having called the French into Italy—to form a league for their expulsion, hoping by that means to become the sole arbiter of the destinies of all. The Italian exiles, and in particular the Neapolitans, seconded him in this design, using all their efforts to induce King Charles to set out ; but the chief statesmen and most reputed military leaders in France highly disapproved of the enterprise. No one was sure of what the next day might bring forth, and all men's minds were stirred by strange fears.

During this stage of affairs, the ambassadors of all the Italian States were travelling about the Peninsula and the whole of Europe. So great an activity had never yet been seen in the world : all Italy's literary labour was suspended to make way for diplomatic work, and the infinite number of despatches penned at that time have become a literary and historical monument of capital importance, which brings clearly before us the true state of things in those fatal years. Now, as ever, the Venetian ambassadors took the lead for practical good sense and political prudence ; the Florentine for strength of psychological analysis, study of character and the passions, power of description, incomparable elegance and ease of style. These same gifts were to be found more or less in all, and this was the moment that gave birth to the new political education of the Italian people, and created the modern science of statesmanship.

Since the year 1492 [illegible] netian ambassador, Zaccaria Con-

splendid festival, to which one hundred and fifty ladies were invited, and the Pope gave a supper to the bridal couple, at which Ascanio Sforza, many other Cardinals, and a few ladies were present. The ambassador of Ferrara tells us that among them, "Madonna Giulia Farnese *de qua est tantus sermo*,[1] . . . and Madonna Adriana Ursina, who is the mother-in-law of the said Madonna Giulia," were the most prominent. They passed the whole night in dancing, acting plays with songs and instrumental music, and all received rich presents. The Pope, concludes the ambassador, took part in everything, and it would take too long to describe all that passed." *Totam noctem consumpsimus, iudicet modo Exc. Dominatio Vestra si bene o male.*[2]

The Duke of Gandia was preparing to go to Spain to contract a wealthy marriage. The Pope's other son, Cæsar, who, young as he was, held a bishopric with a yearly revenue of 16,000 ducats, was nevertheless very impatient of ecclesiastical life; he went out shooting in the dress of a layman, was violent and unbridled in his passions, and exercised an extraordinary ascendency over his father's mind. As to Giuffré, new marriage schemes were always being formed for him.[3] Meanwhile Rome swarmed with assassins, priests, Spaniards, and light women; crimes of all kinds abounded. Each day witnessed the arrival of Mussulmans and Jews driven from Spain, and who found here an easy welcome, since the Pope, by the imposition of heavy taxes, made them pay freely for his Christian tolerance. He himself appeared at the chase and the promenade surrounded by armed men, with Djem on one side, and the Duke of Gandia on the other, both clad in Turkish costume. Sometimes he was even seen among his women in Spanish dress, with high boots, a dagger, and an elegant velvet cap.[4]

The Popes of the Renaissance had long led a worldly life, and given themselves up to vice; but Borgia was the only one to cast aside all show of decency and display his vices with open cynicism. Neither before nor after was religion ever so publicly profaned by derisive mirth and the most shameless debauchery.

[1] Infessura, who also gives a description of this marriage, speaks of Giulia openly as the Pope's mistress, *ejus concubina*, and adds that he will not repeat all that was related of that supper, "because it was either not true, or if true, incredible."

[2] This letter, dated 13th of June, 1493, addressed to the Duke of Ferrara by his ambassador, Giov. Andrea Boccaccio, *ep mutinensis*, is to be found in the "Lucrezia Borgia" of Gregorovius, Document x.

[3] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," vol. viii. p. 327, second edition.

[4] Despatch of Giacomo Trotti, Milan, 2 December, 1494, quoted by Gregorovius in his "Lucrezia Borgia," vol. i.

could be turned aside from their purpose."[1] "This snake has its tail in Italy. The Italians are urging things on with all their might; Lodovico would like to overthrow Naples only, and remain winner of the game; but his rage has led him into the trap prepared for others"[2] "The best plan therefore was to swing at anchor between Naples and Milan; let those scratch themselves who have the itch."[3] "To stop all this it would be necessary to spend more money than Lodovico; so now the expedition will be undertaken, and if the king wins, *actum est de omne Italia*, everything will be topsy-turvy; if he loses he will revenge himself upon the Italian merchants in France, especially upon yours"[4] Piero dei Medici still hoped to win over Lodovico, and Becchi, who had known him from the cradle, almost scolded him, writing: "Attend to your own affairs, for you have a world of trouble before you. Do you think that Lodovico does not know the peril to which he is exposing himself and others? With your counsels you will only make him more obstinate."[5] New ambassadors were sent, among them Piero Capponi, who at that time appeared to be a friend of Piero dei Medici; and all wrote decidedly that nothing could be done but prepare for defence.

Meanwhile the Florentine ambassadors at Milan could get very little information from Lodovico. Agnolo Pandolfini, who was there in 1492 and 1493, found him employed in weaving plots and consulting astrologers, in whom he had the profoundest faith. He said that he wished to bridle the mouth of Ferrante, who was too fond of novelty. In 1494 the die was cast, but even then the Ambassador Piero Alamanni could learn nothing from him. "You always speak to me of this Italy, whose countenance I have never beheld. No man has ever given thought to my affairs, therefore I have had to assure them as best I might."[6] And when the ambassador pointed out to him the danger in which he had placed himself, he replied that he saw it clearly; but that the worst danger was "to be held a fool" Then, almost laughing at him, he added: "Speak then; what would the Florentines suggest? Be not enraged, but help me to think."[7] Nor could anything more be extracted from him. From Venice the ambassadors wrote that the Venetians maintained an extreme reserve, and

[1] Desjardins, same work, vol i. p 237: letter of 20th of September, 1493.
[2] Ibid. vol i. pp. 330, 331: letters of 28th and 29th of September, 1493.
[3] Ibid. vol. i. p 350. letter of 21st of November, 1493.
[4] Ibid vol. i p 358: letter of 17th of January, 1494. See also at pp. 350 and 352 the letters of the 29th of November and 9th of December, 1493.
[5] Ibid vol i. p 359: letter of 22nd and 23rd of January, 1494.
[6] Letter of 31st of March, 1494. See Appendix, Doc. p. I.
[7] Desjardins, vol i. p. 555. letter of 7th of June, 1494.

tarini, had supplied his government with very minute reports of the commercial, political, and administrative condition of France. In his opinion it was impossible that the country should ever decide upon an expedition to Italy, encompassed as it was by dangers and enemies, and with a monarch who, according to him, was fit for little either mental or bodily.[1] But in that same year the king pacified England by gold, Spain by the surrender of Roussillon and other lands on the Pyrenean frontier, and Maximilian by a treaty guaranteeing other important cessions.[2] Lodovico il Moro bound himself to give arms and money, and free passage to the Italian army. Also, at the same time he continued his secret negotiations with several Italian States, and promised the hand of his daughter Bianca and a rich dowry to Maximilian, in exchange for the investiture of Milan.[3] Nevertheless matters had not yet reached a definite conclusion. The Florentine ambassador wrote from Naples: "The Duke of Bari" (thus to his great annoyance Lodovico il Moro was always entitled) "has much delight in keeping things unsettled, and forms a thousand projects at present only successful in his own imagination. Therefore it is necessary to be upon our guard."[4]

Casa, the Florentine orator, at the French Court, in June, 1493, still considered the enterprise impossible, on account of the general disorder and the weakness of the king, who allowed himself to be pulled this side and that, and was so incapable as to be ashamed to give his own opinion.[5] But later, seeing that the king had decided against the judgment of the most influential men, and that preparations went on in spite of every opposition, he became almost doubtful of his own judgment, and wrote: "To understand things here, it were needful to be a magician or prophet; to be prudent does not suffice. This affair may turn out any way."[6] And Gentile Becchi, another orator who arrived in September, wrote to Piero dei Medici, "that matters had gone so far that it was impossible to hope that those bronze-headed Frenchmen

[1] Albéri, "Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti." Series i. vol. iv. p. 16 and fol.

[2] C. de Cherrier, "Histoire de Charles VIII. roi de France," 2 vols., Paris, Didier, 1868, vol. i. p. 235. This valuable work must be read with caution, since it is not free from mistakes; and the author has not availed himself of all the materials within his reach, neither has he always consulted the best authorities.

[3] C. de Cherrier, "Histoire de Charles VIII. roi de France," vol. i. p. 242.

[4] Letter from Piero Alamanni to Piero dei Medici, written from Naples the 2nd of January, 1493. *Vide* Desjardins, "Négociations diplomatiques de la France avec la Toscane," vol. i. p. 442.

[5] Desjardins, same work, vol. i. p. 227.

[6] Ibid. vol. i. p. 256: letter of 18th of September, 1493.

one moment there was a glimmer of hope when the Pope proposed to marry one of his sons to a natural daughter of the king; but his Holiness afterwards drew back as though he had only been mocking him. Ferrante then wrote to his ambassador in Rome, with bitter complaints of the Pope's conduct at the moment when they were about to mingle their blood. "Keep in mind," he said in conclusion, "that we are no longer young, nor mean to let him lead us by the nose"[1]

Alexander VI cared little for all this, and continued his negotiations with Venice and Milan; whereupon the king wrote: "From whom does he wish to defend himself, when no one is attacking him? It seems to be our fate that the popes should leave no one in peace, but try to ruin all Italy. We are now forced to take arms; but the Duke of Bari should think of what may be the consequences of the tumult he is fomenting. He who arouses this storm will not be able to quell it at his own pleasure. Let him think well of the past, and he will see that whenever internal dissensions have brought foreign powers into Italy, they have oppressed and tyrannized over the land in a way that has left its traces to the present day."[2] And shortly afterwards he wrote to his ambassador in Spain, in the tone of a man driven to desperation: "This Pope plainly intends to overturn all Italy. In order to gain money, he is about to create at one stroke thirteen cardinals, from whom he will extract no less than 300,000 ducats. He found all tranquil, and immediately began to make plots and create tumults." "He leads a life that is the abomination of all men, without respect for the chair which he occupies, nor care of aught but of exalting his children by hook or by crook, and this is his sole desire, and it seems to him a thousand years before he can go to war, for, from the beginning of his pontificate, nothing else has he done, save troubling himself and molesting all men, now in one way, now in another. . . . And Rome is more full of soldiers than of priests; and when he goes about Rome, it is with squadrons of men-at-arms before him, with helmets on their heads and lances by their sides, for all his mind is given to war, and to our harm, nor does he omit anything that he can machinate against us, not only stirring up in France the Prince of Salerno, and some other of our rebels, but in Italy encouraging every desperate character whom he deems adverse to us: and in all things he proceeds with fraud and dissimulation, according to

[1] "Codice Aragonese," published by Commendatore Trinchera, head director of the Neapolitan Archives, in 3 vols Naples, 1866–74. The letter we quote is dated 11th of April, 1493, and is in vol. xi. part i. p. 355.

[2] Ibid., vol. xi. part i. p 394. Letter of 24th April, 1493.

changed the conversation whenever the French were mentioned. "They believe that it will best serve their turn to remain at peace themselves, and let the other Italian powers spend and suffer." [1] "They distrust all the world, and are persuaded that they are rich enough to hire at any moment as many men at arms as they may need, and thus always have it in their power to make things go the way they will." [2]

The King of Naples, meanwhile, was a prey to the utmost agitation, and with the aid of Pontano, wrote letters that were sometimes almost prophetic of the evils about to overwhelm Naples and the whole of Italy. The Pope could not forgive him for having opposed his election, and for having seconded the sale of Cervetri and Anguillara to the Orsini. His niece, Isabella, the wife of Galeazzo Sforza, was kept as a prisoner by Lodovico, who was convulsing all Italy by his dark designs; his daughter, Eleonora, wife of Ercole d'Este, and the only person who had any soothing influence over the Moor, had died in 1493; his other daughter, Beatrice, had been repudiated by the King of Hungary, and the Pope favoured the dissolution of the marriage.[3] Meanwhile, all men spoke of the speedy arrival of the French! At

[1] Desjardins, vol. i. p. 504: letter of 12th of August, 1494.

[2] Ibid. vol. i. p. 514: letter of 20th of September, 1494. These letters are nearly all from Paolo Antonio Soderini to Piero dei Medici. When shortly afterwards the latter was driven to take refuge in Venice, Soderini, who had already declared for the new Government, hardly looked at him. Speaking of this, De Commines, who had changed his flag so many times, says that Soderini "estoit des saiges hommes qui fussent en Italie." Ph. de Commines, "Memoires," vol. xi. p. 359, Dupont edition. See also: "Lettres et Négociations de Ph. de Commines," by Baron Kervyn de Lettenhove (3 vols.) Brussels, 1867–74. This is a very valuable work. Piero Capponi, who tore the contract in Charles VIII.'s face, and so greatly contributed to the expulsion of the Medici, had been, while in Paris, the confidant of Piero. Commines, however, is scandalized this time, and styles him a traitor ("Memoires," vol. xi. p. 340); but he had personal motives for disapproving Capponi. When together with Etienne de Vesc and Briçonnet he tried to hatch intrigues in Piero dei Medici's favour, it was Capponi who replied to him "*comme par mocquerie.*" Lettenhove, vol. xi. pp. 98, 144. It must, however, be remembered that when Capponi received from the bishop of St. Malo proposals adverse to the Medici, he wrote to Piero on the subject saying, "I am sure that you have no one who treats your affairs with more zeal than myself." Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. i. p. 393 and fol. It is true that his conduct was not very open; but we cannot rely upon De Commines' judgment of him, for he was then intriguing on his own account. In his opinion Lodovico had given too little money to the king's ministers: "Si argent ils devoient prendre, ils en devoient demander plus." (Commines as quoted by Lettenhove, vol. xi. p. 97.)

[3] Beatrice had married Mathias Corvinus, King of Hungary, on the 25th of June, 1475. After his death, she espoused Ludovic, King of Hungary, the 23rd of July, 1493. This marriage being dissolved, she returned to Naples in 1501, and died in 1508.

not a hair upon us that has ever thought of giving him the least cause for it." [1]

The king now saw that the inevitable catastrophe was at hand, he felt that his strength was failing, that death was near, and that his kingdom would be shattered to pieces His anguish was apparent in every line of the letters in which he continually harped upon the same theme, now with bursts of hot wrath, now with forebodings of humiliation. On the 17th of January, 1494, he wrote what may be considered his last letter. "Lodovico counsels the Pope to keep up appearances with us, so that if the French should not come, he may still be able to come to an arrangement with us, although as Lodovico says, we do not desire him for our chaplain, much less for our relative. If after all the French come, then he will be freed from all fear of us, or of the Orsini and the other barons, whose lands he may then bestow upon his children; and thus the Pontiffs will in future be able to rule their States, rod in hand. In this way Lodovico continues to set Italy ablaze, as he himself allows; but he adds that the Pope must not think too much of the ills of Italy, because to avoid perpetual fever, one must put up with tertian ague. And the Pope being both keen and timid, lets himself be entirely dominated by Ascanio and guided by Lodovico; so that in vain we seek to persuade him to enjoy his papacy in peace, without mixing himself up in party intrigues like some mercenary leader, as the Duke of Bari would have him do. The latter asserts that we only make a show of warlike preparations, and that in any great emergency we would even have recourse to Turkish aid. But we are prepared to defend ourselves, and we shall be ready for the most desperate resolves, if others will respect neither faith, country, nor religion. We remember that Pope Innocent himself wrote:—

"Flectere si nequeo Superos, Acheronta movebo."

Finally, as though he already beheld the dreaded enemy before him, he concluded with these almost prophetic words: "Never did Frenchmen come into Italy, without bringing it to ruin, and this coming of theirs is of a sort, if one well considers it, that must bring universal ruin, although they threaten us alone." [2]

And Ferrante, his mind distracted by these tormenting thoughts, finally ceased to breathe after a three days' illness,

[1] "Codice Aragonese," vol. i. part ii. p. 348 and fol.: letter of 18th December, 1493

[2] Ibid., vol. ii. part ii. p. 421. After this come only a few very brief letters of Ferrante.

his nature, and to make money, he sells every smallest office and benefice."[1]

Yet, in August, Virginio Orsini bound himself to pay to the Pope, in return for free possession of the disputed estates, the sum of 25,000 ducats, under the guarantee of Ferrante and Piero dei Medici;[2] and on the same day, a contract of marriage was finally signed between Giuffré Borgia, aged twelve, the Pope's son, and Doña Sancia, daughter of Alfonso of Aragon. She was represented by Don Federigo,[3] her uncle, who, as her proxy, received the nuptial ring amid the laughter of the guests, and especially of the Pope, who took him to his arms.[4] Ferrante was beside himself with joy at this marriage, which was to be kept secret until Christmas. He was now so full of hope, that on the 5th of December he proposed an Italian league to the Pope.[5] But before Christmas, Alexander had already changed his mind, and had allied himself to Lodovico "We and our father," now wrote the king to his ambassador, "have always obeyed the popes, yet there has not been one who has not sought to work us the greatest ill in his power. And with this pope, albeit he be of our own country, it has been impossible to have a single day's peace Truly we know not why he tries to trouble us in this wise, unless it be by the influence of the heavens, and to follow the example of the others, for it seems our fate that all popes should torment us." "He seeks to keep us in continual suspense while we have

[1] "Codice Aragonese," vol. xi. part xi. p. 41 and fol. · Letter of 7th June, 1493.

[2] Piero dei Medici always gave his support to Ferrante. See the letters written by him to his ambassador at Naples, in July, 1493. They are to be found in the Archives at Florence, cl. x. dist. 1, No. 1, doc 6.

[3] Prince of Altamura, Alfonso's brother, and King Ferrante's second son.

[4] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. vii. p. 332 (2nd edition). See also in the "Codice Aragonese," the letters of 3rd August, and 29th August, 1493, pp 198, 200, and 223. But in these letters apparently some of the dates are misprinted. The Florentine ambassador, A Guidotti, in a letter of 17th August, 1493, directed to the Eight (Archivio Fiorentino, cl. x. dist 2, No. 18, doc. 21), gives minute details of the agreement with the Orsini and of the marriage contract, in which was inscribed, how "the Pope came into affinity with the most serene King Ferdinand, and how in the stead and name of their excellent Majesties, Don Federigo promised to give to wife to the most illustrious Don Geffré, *His Holiness's son*, Madonna Xances, daughter of the Duke of Calabria. . . . Such contract being stipulated and consented to by the parties, then *per verba de presenti*, Don Geffré contracted matrimony with Madonna Xances in the person of Don Federigo, her proxy, to whom *in signum matrimonii*, he gave and his Excellency received the ring, nor did this act of standing in the place of a woman, and as a woman receiving the ring, pass without much laughter and merriment, and lastly with great gaiety Don Federigo was embraced as a relative by the Pope, and by all the relations of His Holiness."

[5] "Codice Aragonese," vol ii. part ii. p 322: letter of 5th December, 1493.

Pope would have obtained this money, had not the ambassador who brought it, been seized and robbed at Sinigaglia, in the month of September by the Prefect Giovanni della Rovere, brother of the Cardinal of San Piero in Vincoli.[1]

Charles the VIII. having passed the Monginevra, entered Asti in the first days of September. He soon received intelligence that Don Federico and the Neapolitan fleet had been repulsed with heavy losses before Porto Venere, and that the Duke of Orleans and his Swiss had entered Rapallo, sacked the place, and put all the inhabitants, even the sick in the hospital, to the sword, thereby striking terror into the Italians, who were unaccustomed to carry on war in so sanguinary a fashion. On reaching Piacenza, the king learnt that Gio. Galeazzo, whom he had recently seen at Pavia, had just died there, poisoned, as all men said, by the Moor, who after celebrating his obsequies at Milan, had entered St. Ambrogio, at the hour indicated by his astrologer, to consecrate the investiture already granted to him by Maximilian, King of the Romans. All this filled the minds of the French with suspicion, almost with terror; they were beginning to understand the nature of their closest ally's good faith. In fact, while Lodovico with one hand collected men and money for their cause, with the other he wove the threads of a league intended to drive them from Italy, when the moment should arrive. In 1493, Perrone dei Baschi, a man of Italian origin, had come to visit the Courts of the Peninsula, *carrying back wind for his pains*, as Piero dei Medici wrote.[2] Next came Philip de Commines, a man of much acuteness and talent, though of no integrity of character, and well acquainted with Italy, where he had already been several times before, but he found at no Court any hope of assured friendship, much less of

[1] On the person of the Ambassador Bozardo, besides the 40,000 ducats, a letter from the Sultan to the Pope was found, offering 300,000 ducats more for Djem's dead body, and concluding thus: "In this way, the worthy father of the Catholic Church could purchase states for his children and our brother Djem would find repose in the other life." Both the letter and that of the Pope to the Sultan are to be found in Burckhardt's Diary and in Sanudo's "De adventu Karoli regis Francorum in Italiam," a work still in great part unpublished, and of which the original MS. is in the National Library in Paris. A copy which I caused to be made of it, with the assistance of our Ministry of Public Instruction, is in the Library of St Mark at Venice, and Professor Fulin has commenced its publication in the "Archivio Veneto" It may be considered as the 1st vol. of the "Diarii," by the same author, since they begin where this leaves off. See Cherrier, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 415; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c. (2nd edition), vol. vii. p. 350, note (1).

[2] See the previously quoted inedited letters of Piero dei Medici, and those published by Desjardins.

on the 25th of January, 1494.[1] He was succeeded by Alfonso, who, more impetuous, more cruel, and of less capacity than his father, now perceived the desperate condition of his kingdom, and sought for aid from the Pope, from Lodovico, from the Turk, and from all in vain, for now the coming of the French was inevitable—inevitable, therefore, the fall of the Aragonese in Naples.

Meanwhile, Piero dei Medici in Florence was indifferent to everything: his inclinations were in favour of the Aragonese, but his chief occupation lay in tilting matches;[2] the Venetians looked on quietly; Ferrara declared herself friendly to France; Bologna made an alliance with Lodovico; the Pope, always true to his character, alarmed by the threat of a council that Charles VIII. talked of assembling, declared that he should give him a friendly reception in Rome,[3] while at the same time he despatched one of his nephews to Naples to place the crown on King Alfonso's head. Confusion was at its height, and the Italian exiles pushed on the French expedition with greater urgency than ever, each one hoping in this way to revenge his own particular wrongs upon existing governments.

On the 1st of March, Charles VIII. made his state entry into Lyons, to assume the command of the expedition; an advanced guard under the Scotchman d'Aubigny, was already pushing towards the Neapolitan frontier, and the Duke of Orleans was at Genoa. The Neapolitans on their side sent the Prince of Altamura with thirty galleys towards Genoa, while the Duke of Calabria, an inexperienced youth, entered the Pontifical States, under the guidance of tried generals, among whom was G. G. Trivulzio, a valiant Milanese exile. The Pope seemed to have lost his head, and no longer knew what course to adopt. Yet, taking advantage of the emergency, he asked the Sultan to anticipate the yearly payment of the 40,000 ducats due to him for the custody of Djem, and in order to frighten the Turk, he added that the French were coming to liberate that prince, in order with his help to carry the war into the East. And the

[1] "Cronaca di Notar Giacomo," Naples, 1845, p. 178. Guicciardini and Machiavelli pretend that King Ferrante at the last wished to throw himself into Lodovico's hands, and Machiavelli adds that he desired to take his daughter from Gian Galeazzo and give her to the Moor, evidently forgetting that she was the mother of three children and that Lodovico had a wife.

[2] *Vide* his letters dated 5th and 23rd of January, 1494, among the documents published by A. Cappelli, under the title: "Fra Girolamo Savonarola and Notices of his Times," Modena, 1869.

[3] Brief of the 1st of February, 1494, in the "Archivio Storico" ("Annali" by Malipiero), vol. vii. p. 404.

formidable army, rode into Florence with his lance in rest, believing that that fact sufficed to make him master of the city. But the Florentines were armed, they had collected six thousand soldiers within the walls, and they knew perfectly well that from the vantage posts of towers and houses, they could easily worst an army scattered through the streets. They therefore repulsed the King's insolent proposals, and when he threatened to sound his trumpets, Piero Capponi, tearing up the offered treaty, replied that the Florentines were more ready to ring their bells. Through this firmness equitable terms were arranged. The Republic was to pay 120,000 florins in three quotas; the fortresses, however, were to be speedily restored to her. On the 28th of November the French left the city, but not without stealing all that remained of the collection of antiquities in the Medici Palace. Commines tells us that all did the best they could for themselves, and that the highest officers stole most. Nevertheless the citizens were thankful to be finally delivered alike from old tyrants and new invaders.

Having reached Rome, Charles VIII., in order to have done with the Pope,[1] who now seemed inclined for resistance, pointed his guns against the Castle of St. Angelo, and thus matters were soon settled. On the 17th of June, 1495, Briçonnet was nominated Cardinal of St. Malò, and the King attended a grand mass celebrated by the Pope in person, who was so little accustomed to perform any religious ceremonies, that he was only enabled to go through it by the help of Cardinal di Napoli, who filled the office of prompter.

In accordance with the treaty signed in Rome, Charles VIII. continued his journey towards Naples, accompanied by the Cardinal of Valencia as hostage, together with the Prince Djem. On their arrival at Velletri, however, the Cardinal had vanished; his plate-chests had already stopped half-way; the trunks containing his baggage, with which seventeen mules were loaded, were discovered to be empty; Djem fell so gravely ill upon the way that he died directly he reached Naples. Everybody said that he had been poisoned by the Borgia; but the Venetians, who always had accurate intelligence from their ambassadors, asserted on the contrary that he had died a natural death.[2] The

[1] At this juncture a circumstance occurred which caused much mirth to all Italy. The Beautiful Giulia, her sister, and Madonna Adriana had fallen into the hands of the French. At this the Pope was in despair, and knew no peace until his Giulia and her companions were liberated on payment of the sum of 3,000 ducats. Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia," vol i. p. 81.

[2] Cherrier, *op. cit.*, vol. ii p. 137, gives a translation of the letter, in which

material assistance, although many looked forward to the arrival of the French as a means of promoting their own designs. He who in his "Memoirs" said of the men of his own time: "Nous sommes affoiblis de toute foy et loyaulté, les uns envers les aultres, et ne sçauroye dire par quel lieu on se pouisse asseurer les uns des aultres,"[1] experienced in Italy, the truth of his observations, and discovered that he was among a people still keener and more cunning than himself.[2]

Nevertheless the fortunes of the French prospered rapidly. The Duke of Calabria, having entered Romagna, withdrew across the Neapolitan frontier at the first glimpse of D'Aubigny's forces; and the bulk of the French army, commanded by the King in person, marched through the Lunigiana without encountering obstacles of any kind. After taking Fivizzano, sacking it, and putting to the sword the hundred soldiers who defended it, and part of the inhabitants, they pushed on towards Sarzana, through a barren district, between the mountains and the sea, where the slightest resistance might have proved fatal to them. But the small castles, intended for the defence of these valleys, yielded one after the other, without any attempt to resist the invaders; and hardly had the siege of Sarzana commenced than Piero dei Medici arrived, frightened out of his senses, surrendered at discretion, and even promised to pay 200,000 ducats.

But on Piero's return to Florence on the 8th of November, he found that the city had risen in revolt, and sent ambassadors to the French king on its own account to offer him an honourable reception; but that at the same time it was making preparations for defence in case of need. So great was the public indignation that Piero took flight to Venice, where his own ambassador, Soderini, hardly deigned to look at him, having meanwhile declared for the republican government just proclaimed in Florence, where everything had been rapidly changed. The houses of the Medici, and their garden at St. Mark had been pillaged, exiles had been recalled and acquitted; a price put on Piero's head and that of his brother, the Cardinal. At the same time, however, Pisa had risen in rebellion under the eyes of King Charles, and cast the Marzocco[3] into the sea: Arezzo and Montepulciano, too, had followed Pisa's example. The fabric, so long and so carefully built up by the Medici, was now suddenly crumbling into dust.

On the 17th of November, Charles VIII., at the head of his

[1] "Mémoires," vol i. p. 156.
[2] Lettenhove, *op. cit.*, vol. i p. 194; vol. ii. pp. 108 and 123.
[3] The lion with the lily, ensign of the Florentine Republic.

Commines, who was ambassador to Venice, and who at the news of his king's entry into Naples had beheld the Senators so cast down, that, as he says, the Romans after the defeat at Cannae could not have been "plus esbahis ne plus espouvantés,"[1] now found them full of courage and indignation. The Neapolitans, soon wearied of bad government, had risen in revolt, and Charles VIII. after a stay of only fifty days in Naples had to make his departure with excessive haste, before every avenue of retreat should be cut off, leaving hardly more than 6,000 men in the kingdom, and taking with him a numerous army, which however only numbered 10,000 real combatants. On the 6th of July a pitched battle took place at Fornuovo near the river Taro. The allies had assembled about 30,000 men, three-fourths of whom were Venetians, the rest composed of Lodovico's soldiers and a few Germans sent by Maximilian. At the moment of attack they had in fighting array double the number of the French force; but half of them remained unused owing to a blunder of Rodolfo Gonzaga, while the enemy were in good order, with their vanguard under the command of G. G. Trivulzio, who, notwithstanding that he was in arms against his own countrymen, displayed great valour and military genius. The battle was bloody, and it was a disputed question which side obtained the victory; but although the Italians were not repulsed, remaining indeed masters of the field, the French succeeded in cutting their way through, which was the chief object they had in view. The King made a halt at Asti and received the Florentine ambassadors, to whom he again promised to deliver up the strongholds held by his forces—the city of Pisa included—and received 30,000 ducats in lieu of the 120,000 promised in Florence, but gave in pledge jewels of an equal value, to be restored to him as soon as the fortresses should be given up Besides this the Florentines promised 250 men-at-arms to help the King's cause in Naples, as well as a loan of 70,000 ducats, which, however, they never gave, as they did not receive the fortresses.[2] Lodovico, taking advantage of the situation, soon made an agreement with the French on his own account, without concerning himself about the Venetians; he believed that in this wise he had freed himself from both, but in reality he had earned the hatred of both, as he was soon driven to confess.

The fortunes of the French now declined rapidly in Italy, and all the more speedily owing to their bad government in the

[1] Commines, *op. cit.*, vol ii p 168; Cherrier, *op cit.*, vol ii p. 151.

[2] This treaty is to be found in Desjardins, *op. cit.*, vol. i. p 630. See also Cherrier, *op. cit.*, vol. ii p. 293.

King was highly indignant at the Cardinal's escape, and exclaimed: "Perfidious Lombard, and more perfidious Pope!"[1] His attempts to recapture the Cardinal were all in vain Scarcely encountering any obstacles, Charles led his army on to Naples. Alfonso of Aragon renounced the throne, and fled to Sicily; Ferdinand II., or Ferrandino, as he was called, after vainly seeking aid from all, even from the Turk, made a fruitless stand at Monte San Giovanni, which was taken, destroyed, and all its population put to the sword.[2] Gian Giacomo Trivulzio deserted the Aragonese, and passed over to the enemy; Virginio Orsini prepared to do the same; Naples rebelled in favour of the French, who marched in on the 22nd of February. The following day Ferrandino fled to Ischia, then to Messina. And shortly the ambassadors of the Italian States appeared to offer congratulations to the conqueror.

Now at last the Venetians were aroused, and having sent their envoys to Milan to know if Lodovico were disposed to take up arms to drive out the French, they found him not only ready to do so, but full of indignation. "The king has no head," he said, "he is in the hands of persons who only think of getting money, and would not make half a wise man." He recalled the haughtiness with which he had been treated by the French, and declared himself resolved to join in any league in order to drive them from the country. He advised that money should be sent to Spain and to Maximilian, to induce them to attack France; but added that care must be taken not to call them into Italy, "since having already one fever here, we should then have two."[3]

A league was in fact concluded between the Venetians, Lodovico, the Pope, Spain and Maximilian. And Philip de

the Ten mention this event. And in fact the Borgia, by Djem's decease, lost the annual payment of 40,000 ducats, without obtaining the 300,000 promised to them on receipt of his corpse. Sanudo recounts the rise and progress of Djem's malady. It was a feverish cold, which the doctors treated with bloodletting and other energetic remedies. At Aversa he was already so much worse, that he had to be carried on *a bier* ("De adventu Karoli regis," p. 212 of the copy in the Library of St. Mark). This author, according to his wont, refers to the letters of the Venetian ambassador who was present, and who observes that Djem's death had been hurtful to Italy, "and especially to the Pope, who was thus deprived of the 40,000 golden ducats, yearly paid to him by his brother (the Sultan) for keeping Djem in safe custody." Following the Venetian orthography, we write Sanudo; some authors call him Sanuto.

[1] Sanudo, "De adventu," &c., p. 230.

[2] "Il ne sembloit point aux nôtres, que les Italiens fussent hommes," wrote de Commines *à propos* of French cruelties.

[3] This letter is to be found in Romanin, "Storia documentata di Venezia," vol. v. p. 50. See also Cherrier, "Histoire de Charles VIII.," vol. ii. p. 97.

3. The Borgia.

While, however, the apparent peace lasted, general attention was fixed upon the events occurring in Rome and the Roman territory. Alexander VI. had profited by the ill-fortune of the French, to confiscate the possession of the Orsini, who had deserted the Aragonese to go over to Charles VIII., and after abandoning him, as soon as they saw his luck beginning to turn, had joined his party once more. In this way, Virginio Orsini had been taken prisoner by the Spaniards when they came to replace Ferdinand II on the Neapolitan throne. According to the terms of the treaty, they ought to have sent him across the frontier, but the Pope opposed the idea fiercely, even with threats of excommunication, for his object was the extermination of the Orsini family. Upon this Virginio was shut up in the Castel dell Uovo at Naples, and there died. His followers were in the meantime stripped of everything in the Abruzzi; where also Alviano and Giovan Giordano Orsini were made prisoners. This was the moment chosen by the Pope to declare war against these, his perpetual enemies, who were still both numerous and powerful. On the 27th of October, his troops under the command of the Duke of Urbino and Fabrizio Colonna, took the field against the Orsini who had withdrawn to Bracciano. Although the principal members of the family were in captivity, and many cruel blows had been that year inflicted upon all their race; yet they were still strong enough to measure their forces with his. Their hopes rose high, when Bartolommeo d'Alviano,[1] having escaped from prison, arrived at Bracciano with a handful of his men. Very shortly the conflict began in earnest, and not only Alviano, but also his wife, the sister of Virginio Orsini, distinguished themselves by their valour. In the first skirmishes the Papal troops were continually worsted. Afterwards, Carlo Orsini and Vitellozzo Vitelli arrived from France; but the Pope's army receiving reinforcements at the same time, on the 23rd of January, 1497, a real battle took place, which terminated in a signal victory for the Orsini. In the previous encounters, the Cardinal of Valencia had been hotly pursued up to the very walls of Rome; now the Duke of Gandia was wounded, the Duke of Urbino a prisoner, and the flight of Cardinal Lunate was so headlong, that he died from its effects. The enemies of the Borgia were in a state of exultation, and the Orsini were once more masters of the Campagna. The Pope, beside himself with

[1] Bartolommeo d'Alviano di Todi, husband of Bartolommea Orsini.

Neapolitan kingdom, and most abominable behaviour towards the new friends who had remained faithful to them. In fact, Captain d'Entrangues, in direct violation of all his sovereign's promises, gave up the citadel of Pisa, on receipt of a bribe, to the inhabitants of that city, who took possession of it on the 1st of January, 1496, to the bitter mortification of the Florentines. Later, for more money, he surrendered Pietrasanta to the Lucchesi; other captains in imitation of his example, yielded Sarzana and Sarzanello.[1] Meanwhile Ferdinand II., with the aid of the Spaniards under Consalvo di Cordova, advanced triumphantly through Calabria and entered Naples on the 7th of July, 1496. In a short time all the Neapolitan fortresses capitulated, and the French who had held them returned to their own country, more than decimated and in an altogether deplorable condition. On the 6th of October Ferdinand II. breathed his last, worn out by the agitation and fatigues of the war, and was succeeded by his uncle Don Federico,[2] the fifth king who had ascended the Neapolitan throne within the last five years. He was crowned by the Cardinal of Valencia.

Once more Italy beheld herself freed from foreigners. It is true that the same year witnessed a brief invasion by Maximilian, who at Lodovico's instigation, came to help Pisa and prevent her from falling into the hands of either the Florentines or Venetians; but he came with a small following, found no supporters, and went away without having accomplished anything. In fact, Naples was now in the absolute power of the Spaniards, who were already maturing their iniquitous designs upon the kingdom; these, however, were only discovered at a later period. Charles VIII. declared himself a penitent man, talked of changing his mode of life, of punishing the Pope, and renewing the Italian expedition; but meanwhile he remained in France and abandoned himself to excesses Thus, at least in appearance, all was tranquil. But on the 7th of April, 1498, the King died of apoplexy; with his death the line of the Valois became extinct, and he was succeeded by the Duke of Orleans under the title of Louis XII. In consequence of his relationship with the Visconti, this potentate had always asserted rights upon the Duchy of Milan. Now in assuming the French crown, he could lay claim to other rights in Italy, and had also the power to assert them openly. And in fact, his reign initiated the long series of fresh invasions which heaped so many calamities upon our land.

[1] Cherrier, *op. cit*, vol. ii. p. 338.
[2] Ferdinand I., Alfonso II., Charles VIII, Ferdinand II., Federico.

summoned and interrogated, replied that while resting in his boat on the night of the 14th, he had seen a gentleman ride up, carrying a corpse behind him, and accompanied by two men on foot; and that all three disappeared as soon as they had thrown the body into the river. Being asked why he had not mentioned this fact sooner, he replied that he had seen the same sort of thing occur at the same place hundreds of times, night after night, without any one making any stir about it.[1] Numerous sailors were sent to drag the river, and the Pope's son was found with his boots, spurs, and mantle still on. His hands were tied; he had nine wounds about the head, arms, and body,—one, and that mortal, in his throat; there were thirty ducats in his purse,[2] an evident proof that robbery was not the object of the murder.[3] The corpse was solemnly interred in the church of Sta Maria del Popolo. Most people rejoiced at this assassination, though the Spaniards uttered curses and lamentations; and the Pope, when he learnt that his son had been cast into the Tiber like other rubbish from the Ripetta, abandoned himself to a grief of which no one had deemed him capable.[4] He shut himself up in the castle of St. Angelo, haunted, said many, by the Duke's spectre, and wept bitterly. For many days he refused food, and his cries could be heard from afar. On the 19th of June, he held a consistory, at which he declared that never had he experienced so heavy a sorrow: "If we had seven Papacies, we would give them all to bring the Duke to life."[5] He showed an apparently sincere repentance for his past life, and announced to all the potentates that he had entrusted the reform of the Church to six cardinals: that this henceforward would be the sole aim of his existence.

These pious designs, however, speedily evaporated. Who was the author of the assassination? What had been his motives? The Orsini[6] were suspected; Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, who had

[1] "Respondit ille; se vidisse suis diebus centum in diversis noctibus in flumen projici per locum prædictum, et nunquam aliqua eorum ratio est habita; propterea de casu huiusmodi existimationem aliquam non fecisse" (Burchardi, "Diarium," cod ii fol 43 National Library, Florence).

[2] Burchardi, Malipiero, Sanudo, &c

[3] The Duke of Gandia was twenty-four years of age, and through his descendants the line of the Borgia was carried down to the eighteenth century. A nephew of his was the third general of the Jesuits

[4] "Pontifex, intellecto ducem interfectum, in flumen ut stercus projectum, compertum esse, commota sunt omnia viscera eius" (Burchardi, "Diarium," cod ii fol 23t)

[5] This speech of the Pope, reported by the Venetian ambassador, is to be found in Sanudo, and is quoted by Reumont, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. iii. part ii. p 338.

[6] Sanudo in his "Diarii," of which the original is in the Library of St. Mark,

rage, made fresh preparations for war, and had even appealed for aid to Consalvo de Cordova, when the Venetians came forward as mediators, and peace was made. The Orsini paid a sum of 50,000 ducats, but were reinstated in their own lands, and all those who were still prisoners in the Neapolitan kingdom, were liberated, excepting Virginio, who had expired before the news of the victory arrived. The Duke of Urbino, for whom they demanded a ransom of 40,000 ducats, was handed over to the Pope on account of the sum they owed him, and the Holy Father refused to set him at liberty, although his own Captain, until he paid the sum imposed by his enemies. The Duke, who was the son of the celebrated Federico, had no family, and the Borgia made use of him as their defender, first despoiling him of his wealth and then, still more shamelessly, of his state.

Notwithstanding the hard terms of the peace, the Orsini were possessed of immense power; the Pope, detested by all men, could depend upon none excepting his 3,000 Spaniards, and on the friendship shown to him by Consalvo de Cordova, who recaptured the Castle of Ostia for his benefit. As the Borgia could no longer undertake fresh warlike enterprises, some demoniac impulse seemed to compel them to turn their weapons against themselves, and exterminate their own relations, under circumstances of incredible iniquity. On the night of the 14th of June, 1497, the Duke of Gandia never returned to his house. The day after, his groom was found wounded, without being able to give any account of his master; the mule ridden by the Duke was caught running about the streets with only one stirrup left, the other having been cut off. The mystery thickened. It appeared that on the preceding evening, the Duke had supped with his brother the Cardinal of Valencia, at the house of their mother Vannozza. They rode away together, but presently separated, the Duke being followed by a man in a mask, who for a long time had gone everywhere with him, and by the groom whom he left in the Piazza dei Giudei. This was all that could be ascertained. At first, the Pope took the matter lightly, thinking that his son was probably in hiding with some woman.[1] But when on the following night he was still missing, the Pope became violently alarmed, and showed the greatest agitation. Suddenly—no one knew how—a rumour spread through the city, that the Duke had been thrown into the Tiber.

One of the Sclavonian charcoal-mongers on the Ripetta, being

[1] "Ipsum ducem alicubi cum puella intendere luxui sibi persuadens, et ob eam causam puellæ domum exire ipsi duci non licere" (Burchardi, "Diarium," in the National Library of Florence, cod. ii. 150, fol. 21).

cisely for that reason he became the most powerful man in Rome, and likewise the most dreaded, for even the Pope seemed to cower beneath the mysterious fascination of his own son. Cæsar had now decided on forsaking the ecclesiastical career, and already there was some talk of making his brother, Don Giuffrè, Cardinal in his stead, who, for that end, was to be separated from his wife, so that she might marry Cæsar as soon as he should have become a layman.[1]

Meanwhile Alexander VI. continued his intrigues with the beautiful Giulia and several Spanish women. According to public rumour, he had had another son by a Roman woman, whose husband revenged himself by killing her father, for having sold her to the Pope[2] Lucrezia, who in the June of 1497, namely, at the time that the Duke of Gandia was murdered by his brother, had been shut up in a convent, without any one knowing for what reason, was, in December, by command of her father, separated from her husband Giovanni Sforza, now declared to be impotent.[3] In March, 1498, according to accounts reported even by the ambassadors, she gave birth to an illegitimate child, whose parentage was involved in much mystery. On the one hand, we find no further mention of him; on the other, some years afterwards a Giovanni Borgia appears, who by his age must have been born somewhere about 1498.[4] By a Brief of September 1, 1501,

e visa fuit per plures, et ibidem tot et tanta luminaria, ut ipsa basilica penitus a fundamentis supra ardere et comburi videretur: ecce quanta prodigia!" Lettera of the 17th of December, 1497 (vol. i sheet 391), and other later ones quoted by the same (vol i sheet 408), repeat things of the same kind. We have still the letters in which the Pope announces the deed and his grief to the different powers, but from these nothing new is to be learnt In a speech made at a Consistory, the Pope explicitly scouted the suspicions weighing upon Ascanio Sforza, the Prince of Squillace, and the Lord of Pesaro, which proves that such suspicions had been entertained. *Vide* Reumont, "Geschichte," &c, and Sanudo, "Ragguagli storici," published by Rawdon Brown (Venice, 1837–38, vol i p 74).

[1] Sanudo mentions this at length in his "Diarii," vol. i sheet 556 and 559 Rawdon Brown gives some fragments of these in his before-quoted work, vol i. p. 212.

[2] Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia," vol. i p. 48

[3] On the 19th of July, the Florentine ambassador, A Bracci, wrote that a divorce was being arranged between the Lord of Pesaro and Donna Lucrezia, "whom his Holiness recalled to the palace three days after the Duke of Gandia's death, and who still remains there." In separating from the Lord of Pesaro, Lucrezia declared herself prepared to take her oath that she had never had any relation with her husband, and was therefore still a virgin. On this head, adds Matarazzo, at p 72: "Etiam advenga ad dio che fusse stata e fusse allor la piu gran p—— che fusse in Roma"

[4] Reumont in his "Storia di Roma" first believed him to be a son of Lucrezia; then a son of the Pope by an unknown mother ("Archivio Storico," Series iii. vol. vii dispensa 2nd, 1873, p 329) The documents published by Gregorovius in his "Lucrezia Borgia" (vol i p 159 and fol) throw a sinister light upon this event

recently had some differences with the Duke, was also accused and the suspicions against him were so strong, that the Cardinal even after receiving an explicit declaration from the Pope that he had never given credence to such rumours, thought fit to present himself to his Holiness, with an escort of faithful friends carrying hidden weapons[1] Numberless researches were begun and then suddenly suspended;[2] and a generally credited rumour was spread that the Duke's assassin was no other than his own brother, Cardinal Cæsar Borgia. "And certainly," wrote the Florentine ambassador from the beginning, "whoever arranged the deed had both plenty of wits and courage; and however one may look at it, 'twas a master's stroke."[3] Gradually rumours ceased as to the author of the assassination; and people only made surmises as to his probable reasons for so abominable a crime.

Men spoke of the jealousy existing between the Cardinal and the Duke regarding Donna Sancia, Don Giuffrè's wife, who led a notoriously scandalous life. Worse things still were said, and people publicly talked of rivalry between the two brothers, saying that they disputed with their father the favours of their sister Lucrezia[4] And these revolting rumours were noted and believed by grave historians; recalled by illustrious poets. Yet although every one repeated these things in public, and all looked upon Cardinal Cæsar Borgia as the author of the assassination; pre-

cites various letters in proof that the Orsini were among the suspected. Manfredi, the Duke of Ferrara's ambassador to Florence, in the letters published by A. Cappelli, from which we have before quoted, gives one of the 12th of August, and another of the 22nd of December, 1497, in the first of which it is mentioned that suspicion had fallen upon the Orsini, and in the second, upon Bartolommeo d'Alviano. Cappelli, "Fra Girolamo Savonarola e notizie intorno al suo tempo," &c.

[1] The Florentine ambassador, Alessandro Bracci, gives details of this affair in his letters, which are to be found in MS in the Florentine Archives, and are of considerable importance That, however, of the 16th of June, giving an account of the murder of the Duke of Gandia, is unfortunately missing from the file Archivio Fiorentino, "Lettre dei Dieci di Balia da Maggio a Dicembre, 1497," cl. x. dist 4, No. 54, sheet 53.

[2] Letter of A Bracci, dated the 4th of July, 1497, MS. above quoted, sheet 78.

[3] Ibid., dated the 17th of June, 1497.

[4] The death of the Duke of Gandia is related in detail by all contemporary historians Gregorovius, in his "Storia di Roma," cites many original documents, among them a very remarkable letter from Ascanio Sforza to Lodovico the Moor, dated the 16th of June, 1497 (vol. vii. p. 399, note 1). Burchardi gives in his "Diario" a minute and tragic report of the event; Matarazzo, Malipiero, all contemporary writers, and the letters of private individuals and of the ambassadors resident in Rome, make mention of it Sanudo quotes much from all these, and we perceive the extraordinary impression the deed had made in Rome, where men's imaginations were greatly excited In a letter of the 16th of June (Sanudo, vol i. sheet 310), he says: "Maxima demonum caterva in basilica beati Petri audita

The unhappy prelate was condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and shut up in a dungeon with some bread and water and a lantern. From time to time the Pope sent other prelates to visit him, in order that while playing at chess with him they might extract confessions that would implicate fresh victims This went on till July, 1498, when the wretched man ceased to live.[1]

Meanwhile negotiations were being carried on with the King of Naples for the marriage of his daughter Carlotta with Cæsar who was still a cardinal. The king was sorely harassed by many vexations, and was heard to declare that he would rather lose his kingdom than bestow his legitimate daughter upon "a priest, the bastard of a priest."[2] Nevertheless to save himself from the Pope's heavy threats, and notwithstanding the abominable rumours referred to above, and which were already in circulation, he was compelled to compromise matters by consenting to the marriage of Lucrezia Borgia with Don Alfonso,[3] Duke of Bisceglie, a youth barely seventeen, and a natural son of Alfonso II. The wedding was celebrated on the 20th of June, 1498, "and the Pope," wrote the Venetian ambassador, "sat up till morning at the feast, *adeo* behaving like a young man."[4]

On the 13th of August, 1498, Cæsar made a declaration in the Consistory, to the effect that he had only accepted the Cardinalate to please the Pope; but that the ecclesiastical life did not suit him, and that he wished to forsake it. The Cardinals gave their consent, Alexander VI. cynically declared that he also consented for the good of Cæsar's soul, *pro salute animæ suæ*;[5] and the latter, as soon as he had thrown aside his frock, was sent as envoy to France, bearer of a Bull of divorce to Louis XII, who wished to be separated from his wife, and married to the widow of Charles VIII, bringing him Brittany as her dower. The King

[1] Burchardi, "Diarium," fol 39 See also a letter of the ambassador A. Bracci, dated 27th September, 1497, *cod cit*, fol 144.

[2] According to Sanudo, the King had said: "Mi para el fiol del papa, ch'è Cardinal, non sia in grado di darli mia fia per moglie, *licet* sia fio del papa." "Diarii," vol 1. part ii p 75 (See note 1 to following page.) The King wrote to his ambassador in France: "The unbearable anxiety we have suffered in order to prevent the marriage . . . . between our legitimate daughter and the Cardinal of Valencia, a thing most unsuitable and contrary to all reason, is already well known to you. Rather would we have consented to lose our kingdom, our children and our life" ("Archivio Storico," vol xv. p 235)

[3] "Not to exasperate the Pope, who plainly threatened him" ("Archivio Storico," vol. xv p 235).

[4] Sanudo, "Diarii," vol. i, part ii. p 164 This second part of the 1st vol. is missing in the original MS at St Mark's Library, and is only to be found in the copy at the Imperial Library of Vienna.

[5] Brief of 3rd September, 1498, in Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. vii. p 423

as to be unable to keep it concealed. Having called a Consistory to announce a victory of the Hungarians over the Turks, he spoke only of Camerino and the Duke. Reminded by the cardinal of Santa Prassede of the object of the meeting, he at once ordered the letter to be fetched; but then, pursuing his other subject, forgot to have it read.[1] While speaking with the Venetian and Spanish ambassadors, he walked about the room too restless to sit still; had the Duke's letter read, which after relating all that occurred concluded as follows: "May this do good to your Holiness;" and then exalted the Duke's prudence and magnanimity, "praising him *ab omni parte*."[2] He predicted his son's future conquests, and in his mind's eye already beheld him master of all central Italy. He was however uncertain of what might be the attitude of Venice with regard to changes so rapid. Therefore calling to him the Venetian ambassador, he immediately began to make great protestations of friendship, in order to see how he would reply. But Antonio Giustinian was a wary politician, and wrote to his Doge: "In answer to what I have just related, Principe Serenissimo, *ambulavi super generalissimis* while the Pope went *super generalibus*."[3]

Meanwhile Valentinois had assumed the titles of Cæsar Borgia of France, by the grace of God, Duke of Romagna, Valencia and Urbino, Prince of Andria, Lord of Piombino, Gonfalonier and Captain-General of the Church, and he advanced upon Bologna without delay. But at this moment France put her *veto* upon any farther proceedings, giving it to be understood that she could not permit the Borgia to extend their conquests in Italy: that they must renounce all idea of Bologna and Tuscany.[4] At the same

[1] Despatch of the 29th July. [2] Despatch of the 27th July.

[3] Despatch of the 22nd July, 1502.

[4] The good Isabella Gonzaga wrote to her husband on this subject: It is said that the king of France means to make you march against the Duke, but it seems to me that we must be very cautious, "for now one knows not whom to trust," and soon we might see the King once more in agreement with the Duke. (Letter of the 23rd July, 1502.) She was not mistaken in this. But it was no sympathy for Valentinois that made her express this opinion. For at the time when the people of Faenza were valiantly defending their lord, she had written to her husband: "I am pleased that the Faentini are so faithful and constant in the defence of their lord, for they restore the honour of the Italians. Thus may God grant them grace to persevere, not to wish ill to the Duke of Valentinois, but because neither that lord, nor his faithful people, deserve so heavy a ruin." (Letter of the 20th April, 1501.) And on the 3rd of July of the same year she wrote, that for the anniversary of the battle of Fornuovo she had ordered "that mass should be celebrated for the souls of those valiant men of ours, who lost their lives to save Italy, according to your excellency's prudent and pious advice." Language such as this is very rare, and therefore all the more worthy of note in the age of the Borgia and Lodovico the Moor.

and the Spanish ambassador. The latter threatened to prove that Alexander was not the true Pope, and Alexander in his turn threatened to have the ambassador cast into the Tiber, and to proclaim that the Queen Isabella was not, after all, "so chaste a woman as the world believed."[1] Nevertheless the Holy Father was considerably frightened, for although he had gone over to France, he still cherished many hopes concerning the kingdom of Naples, which could only be realized with the help of Spain It is true that he was now fond of saying and repeating, that he wished to make Italy "all of one piece;"[2] but the Venetian ambassadors, who clearly saw through him, always maintained that this false and dissimulating man—still at the age of sixty-nine, of most robust health, and always given up to dissipation—daily changed his policy, and got up discussions with the sole intent of obtaining the kingdom of Naples for his son; having meanwhile "converted Rome into the *cloaca* of the world"[3]

On the 6th October, 1499, Louis XII. entered Milan at the head of his army, which was under the command of G. G. Trivulzio; and Lodovico the Moor, who had prepared for defence, now seeing that he had both French and Venetians against him, and that his own people were forsaking him, thought it best to make his escape and go to Germany in search of aid Meanwhile the ambassadors of the Italian States hastened to Milan to present their respects to the King, and with them also came Valentinois in person, with a small suite, and bearing the French flag. He assured himself of the friendliness of the victorious monarch, earned the promise of fresh help in the conduct of his sanguinary enterprises, contracted in Milan a debt of 45,000 ducats, and he then went back again to Rome, where the Pope was collecting money for the same purpose in any and every way, honest or dishonest, and even by fresh assassinations. The Protonotary, Caetani, was thrown into prison, died, and his goods were confiscated; his nephew, Bernardino, was murdered by Valentinois's bravos near Sermoneta, of which estate the Borgia immediately took possession.[4] Meanwhile Valentinois was nominated Gonfalonier of the Church, and he set out for Imola, after proclaiming the ejectment of the Lords of Romagna and the Marches, under the pretence of their having failed to pay the sums they owed to

[1] Sanudo, "Diarii," vol. ii fol 156.

[2] Ibid, vol. ii fol. 274. Further on in folio 393 there is a description of the Pope's changeable nature.

[3] Ibid., vol. ii. folio 326: the ambassador says that the Pope "wants the kingdom (of Naples) for his son"

[4] Afterwards this estate was restored to the Caetani by Julius II, who declared that they had been unjustly despoiled of it.

had already promised Cæsar the Duchy of Valentinois and a certain number of soldiers, who, under the French flag, would be of great assistance to him in his enterprise on Romagna. In order to procure the large sums of money necessary for this French journey, which was to be on the most magnificent scale, many offices were sold, and no less than three hundred individuals accused of infidelity, and then allowed to purchase their pardon. On the same pretext the Pope's Maggiordomo was thrown into prison, and robbed of 20,000 ducats, which he had in his own house and in different banks.[1] The 1st of October, 1498, Cæsar started for France with the Bull of divorce, a Cardinal's hat for Monseigneur d'Amboise, and a letter, in which the Pope told the King: "destinamus Maiestati tuæ *cor nostrum*, videlicet dilectum *filium* ducem Valentinensem quo nihil carius habemus."[2]

The ostentatious splendour of Cæsar and his train certainly dazzled the French; the costume of the new Duke of Valentinois was studded with jewels, and he scattered money broadcast in the streets. Yet he was unsuccessful in the fresh attempts he now made to obtain the hand of Carlotta d'Aragona, who was then at the French Court. It was in vain that the Cardinal of San Pietro in Vincoli—at one time the Pope's enemy—used his best efforts in his favour.[3] The Duke ardently desired this marriage, in the hope that it might one day be the means of giving him possession of the kingdom of Naples; but the Princess, fully sharing her father's feelings, had a positive loathing for him.

Therefore Cæsar, having gained the Duchy of Valentinois and a hundred French spearmen, was obliged to content himself with espousing Carlotta, sister of Jean d'Albret, King of Navarre, and related to Louis XII. The latter monarch promised the Duke further aid, as soon as France should have conquered Milan, for which purpose he was gathering an army, and had already made an alliance with Venice (15th April, 1499), to which the Pope, always ready to change sides, had also given his adherence. On that account a most lively altercation arose between the Pontiff

[1] In Sanudo's "Diarii," vol. i. part ii. p. 44, there is a letter dated August, 1498, ending with these words, "In conclusion, he is a very bad Pope, and shrinks from no evil to swell his children's substance."

[2] This letter is in Molini's "Documenti di Storia Italiana," Florence, 1836-37, vol. i. p. 28

[3] Sanudo frequently mentions the reconciliation which had taken place between the Pope and Cardinal Della Rovere. The Prefect of Rome, often called Prefect of Sinigaglia, his place of abode, was the Cardinal's brother, and was not included in the reconciliation, for having (as before related) shared in the robbery of the Turkish ambassador; but he was afterwards pardoned by a Brief of the 18th November, 1499. See Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. vii. pp. 425-29.

liberated; but Lodovico died in the castle of Loches, after ten years' imprisonment.

At the first announcement of this fortunate news, the Duke of Valentinois, certain of now being able to pursue his bloody enterprise in Romagna, found it impossible to restrain his joy. Close to St. Peter's, a grand bull fight was given, in which Cæsar, "mounted on his Spanish jennet, distinguished himself by killing six fierce bulls, cutting off the head of one of them at a single stroke, which appeared a mighty feat to all Rome."[1]

Meanwhile, pilgrims to the Jubilee continued to arrive in great numbers; there were more religious ceremonies than ever, and indulgences and receipts were proportionately swelled. The corpses of persons murdered during the night were found every morning in the streets of Rome, and not seldom the victims were prelates. One day (27th of May) eighteen bodies were to be seen strung up on the Bridge of St Angelo. These were thieves executed by order of the Pope, among them the doctor to the hospital of St. John Lateran, who was accustomed to spend his early mornings in robberies and assassinations.[2] No sooner did the confessor of the sick learn that any one of them had money, than he revealed it to the doctor, *qui dabat ei recipe*, and they then divided the booty between them.[3] This example of prompt and severe justice was only given because thirteen of the men hung had robbed the French ambassador, with whom the Pope wished to keep upon friendly terms[4]

In the July of the same year another of the tragedies peculiar to the Borgia occurred. The Duke of Bisceglie, Lucrezia's husband, noticing that the friendship of the French had suddenly deprived him of the good-will both of the Pope and of Valentinois, no longer considered himself in safety. In 1499 he had witnessed the exile of his sister Donna Sancia, and seen how the Holy Father had threatened to drive her from her house by force, if she would not go quietly.[5] These and other signs awakened his suspicions, and after some hesitation, he suddenly fled to the Colonna at Gennazzano, intending afterwards to cross the Neapo-

[1] The narrative of P. Cappello, Venetian ambassador, published by Albéri in his "Relazioni," &c, Series II vol ii. p 10

[2] "Singulis diebus bono mane exibat in habitu brevi hospitale cum balista, et interficiebat quos poterat commode, et pecunias corum auferebat" (Burchardi, "Diarium," *cod cit.*, folio 209). [3] Burchardi, "Diarium," ibid.

[4] Sanudo, "Diarii," vol. iii. folio 141. The letters here given, dated 4th of June, 1500, speak of the pleasure of the King of France at this execution, and add that further, within ten days, all the Corsicans were driven away, who had been some of the worst assassins in Rome.

[5] She returned, however, after a short absence.

the Popes. To that place he had already forwarded his own men, who, together with his thousand Swiss, under the command of the *Bailli* of Dijon, made up an army of about 8,000 men. On the 1st of December Imola was taken, and afterwards Forlì, where, however, Caterina Sforza, who commanded the defence, held the fortress with determined valour up to the 12th January, 1500, only yielding to the onslaught of the French. These, in admiration of her manly courage, saved her both from Valentinois' soldiery, and from the revenge of the Pope, who desired her immediate murder, because, in his opinion, "the Sforza family were the spawn of hell serpents."[1] Thus Caterina was allowed to finish her days in Florence, in the convent of the Murate.

After Forlì, Cæsar captured Cesena, where he was obliged to pause. Louis XII. had returned to France, and General Trivulzio, whom he had left behind as governor, so greatly exasperated Milan and Lombardy by his tyrannous rule, that Lodovico, backed by a Swiss army, and favoured by the population, was able to repossess himself of his State, and entered his capital in triumph on the 5th of February. For this reason, Duke Valentinois's French troops were hastily recalled to join their companions already on the retreat, and he was compelled to suspend the war. He then determined to go to Rome, where the jubilee had begun to bring in large pecuniary supplies, which were as usual greedily seized and applied to the usual ends. Robed in black velvet, with a gold chain round his neck, and wearing a solemn and tragic aspect, Cæsar made a grand, triumphal entry at the head of his army into the Eternal City, where he was received by the Cardinals bareheaded. Proceeding a little further, he threw himself at the feet of the Pope, who, after exchanging a few words in Spanish with him *lacrimavit et rixit a un trato.*[2] And now, as it was carnival time, great festivities were arranged. A figure representing *Victoria Julii Cesaris*, mounted upon a car constructed for the purpose, made the round of Piazza Navona, where *servatæ sunt fatuitates Romanorum more solito.*[3] And the festivities multiplied, when news arrived of the return of Louis XII. into Italy at the head of a fresh army; and that Lodovico, betrayed and abandoned by his Swiss, had, on the 10th of April, fallen into the hands of the French, together with his brother Ascanio. The latter was confined in the tower of Bourges in Berry, and was afterwards

[1] Sanudo, "Diarii," vol. ii. folio 329.
[2] The Ambassador V. Capello, in Sanudo, quoted by Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol viii p. 441.
[3] Burchardi, "Diarium," *cod. cit.*, folio 185.

Duke (Valentinois) says that he did not strike him; but if he had struck him it was only what he deserved." Valentinois, on the contrary, merely excused himself by saying that he had committed the crime because the Duke of Bisceglie meant to kill him.

Cæsar was now twenty-seven years of age, in the flower of his health and strength; he felt himself master of Rome, and of the Pope himself, who had so great a fear of him, that he did not dare to utter a syllable the day on which his confidential servant, Pietro Caldes, or Pierotto, was murdered in his arms, and the man's blood spurted in his face. But Alexander was little disturbed by all this, and suffered no loss of rest.[1] "He is seventy years of age," wrote the ambassador Cappello; "he grows younger every day; his anxieties never last through a night; he has a cheerful nature and does whatever is most useful to him"

On the 28th of September, as a means of obtaining money, he made twelve fresh cardinals at once, six of whom were Spaniards, thus gaining 120,000 ducats, which were at once given to Valentinois With this money, the receipts of the jubilee, and the aid given by the French in addition to his own forces under the Orsini, Savelli, Baglioni, and Vitelli, he made himself master of Pesaro, driving out (October, 1500) his former brother-in-law, Giovanni Sforza; he next dispossessed Pandolfo Malatesta of Rimini; and finally, laid siege to Faenza, whose lord, Astorre Manfredi, a boy of sixteen, was so much beloved by his people, that the town stood out valiantly, until at last driven by famine to capitulate on the 25th of April, 1501. It did not surrender until Cæsar Borgia had sworn to spare the townsfolk and save Manfredi's life; as usual, he broke his word, imprisoned Manfredi in the castle of St. Angelo; and after subjecting him to the most loathsome outrages, caused him to be strangled and thrown into the Tiber on the 9th of June, 1502.[2]

[1] P. Cappello, the before-quoted "Relazione." Sanudo, on the contrary, quotes letters from Rome, dated 20th of February, 1498, in which it is related that Pierotto, the waiting man, was found drowned in the Tiber with a *faithful girl, a creature* of the Pope! "And the reason of this is not known." The following are Cappello's words in his "Relazione": "And another time he (Valentinois) killed Messer Pierotto with his own hand, and under the Pope's own mantle, so that the blood splashed in the Pope's face." The letter of Silvio Savelli, quoted by Gregorovius ("Geschichte," &c., vol. vii p. 447), says: "Pontificis cubicularius Perottus in ejus gremis trucidatus." Burchardi says that he was drowned in the Tiber. Possibly he was thrown in already murdered.

[2] At the time of his death, Manfredi was eighteen years of age. Nardi, always a temperate writer, speaks of this deed with the utmost horror. ("Storia di Firenze": Firenze, 1842, vol. i. pp. 237-38.) Guicciardini and many others

litan border, and leaving his wife Lucrezia, who was in delicate health, in real or feigned sorrow. But in August he returned at her entreaty, and joined her at Spoleto, of which town she had been nominated regent. Thence they returned together to Rome.[1]

On the evening of the 15th of July, 1500, the Duke of Bisceglie coming down the steps of St. Peter's was suddenly attacked by assassins, who wounded him about the head and arms, and then took flight. He ran into the Vatican, and related how and by whom he had been wounded to the Pope, who, as usual, was sitting with Lucrezia. She first fainted away, and then led her husband to a chamber in the Vatican and attended to his wounds. For fear of poison, doctors were sent for from Naples. The sick man was nursed by his wife and his sister Donna Sancia, who "cooked for him in a pipkin," since there was no one to be trusted. But Valentinois said, "that which could not be done at dinner shall be done at supper;" and he kept his word. In fact, finding that the unhappy Duke was likely to recover in spite of the very severe wound in his head, he came suddenly into the room one evening, and having sent away the two ladies, who unresistingly obeyed, he had the Duke strangled in his bed by Don Micheletto.[2] Nor this time was much mystery made of the business. The Pope himself, after the first attempt, quietly remarked to the Venetian ambassador, Paolo Cappello—"The

[1] About this time, and before the affair of the Duke of Bisceglie, the Pope had been in danger through the fall of a roof in the Vatican. The Venetian Ambassador, paying him a visit on the 3rd of July, found with His Holiness "Madonna Lucrezia, the princess, and her husband, and one of Madonna Lucrezia's damozels, who is a favourite with the Pope" (Sanudo, "Diarii," vol. iii folio 172).

[2] "Cum non vellet ex huiusmodi vulneribus sibi datis mori, in lecto suo fuit strangolatus circa horam 19*m*, et in sero circa primam horam noctis portatum fuit cadaver ad basilicam Sancti Petri" Burchardi, "Diarium" This is another of the facts related by nearly all contemporary historians and ambassadors, among whom we must specially mention the Venetian ambassador Paolo Cappello, then in Rome, and who, in his above-quoted "Relazione," minutely accounts all the particulars which we have given. His narrative agrees with that of Burchardi and of Sanudo, the latter nearly always transcribing Cappello's Roman despatches either in full or in abridgement. After relating the deed, Sanudo ("Diarii," vol iii. folio 201) adds that the author of the crime was the same who had caused the murder of the Duke of Gandia. Further on (folio 263 retro), he gives the orator's letters of the 18th and 20th of July, stating that the Duke of Bisceglie had been murdered "because he had been trying to kill the Duke (Valentinois), and the Duke has had it done by some bowmen, and has had him cut to pieces in his own room." In the "Relazione," written afterwards, when perhaps he had closer information, Cappello says instead, that Caesar had had him strangled by Don Micheletto. Further on, Sanudo (folio 273) quotes letters of the 23rd and 24th of August, in which it is narrated how the Pope made excuses for Cæsar, alleging that the Duke of Bisceglie wished to kill him.

himself a prophet, sent by God Almighty to reform the Church and redeem Italy. The mere fact of being so different from other men, and of not having the qualities and gifts then universal in men who lacked precisely those which he possessed, gave this friar a prodigious ascendency not only over the crowd, but even over the most cultured minds. Lorenzo dei Medici summoned him to his death-bed, beseeching for absolution from his sins; and this absolution Savonarola refused to grant to his country's tyrant. Angelo Poliziano, and Pico della Mirandola, both followers of that Pagan learning which Savonarola condemned, desired to be buried in St. Mark's church, shrouded in the Dominican habit. Many other literary men, and numerous artists, listened spell-bound to the friar's utterances.

Carried away by his imagination, and also by a singular presentiment, that often seemed to endow him with the gift of reading the future, not only did he predict the future evils of Italy in general terms, but he positively prophesied the coming of foreign armies, led by a new Cyrus. And this prophecy appeared to be miraculously fulfilled in 1494, by the descent of Charles VIII; whereupon the friar became altogether the chief man in Florence, all citizens relying upon him in the most critical moments. Thus with Piero Capponi, and others, he was sent as ambassador to the king, after Piero dei Medici had vilely yielded up everything, and the king, who had shown great roughness to all others, humbled himself before him who threatened him with the divine wrath. When, too, all the terms of the agreement had been signed in Florence, and the army lodged within the walls remained stationary, to the great danger of the city, Savonarola was the only man who dared to present himself before the king, sternly bidding him depart. And his order was obeyed. Therefore it is not surprising if, when he set to work to form a new government, all men turned to the friar, and nothing was any longer done in Florence, save by the counsel of one, who had not only given signal proofs of disinterested love for the public welfare, but, fortunately, also of marvellous political common sense.

On the 2nd of December the bell of the Palazzo Vecchio rang out the summons to a general parliament, and the people hastened to its call in regular order, led by the Gonfaloniers of the different Companies. Twenty Accoppiatori were instantly elected for the nomination of Magistrates, and the arrangement of necessary proposals of reform. Thus, in a short time, the Republic was established upon a new basis, bringing to life old institutions, not, however, without considerably modifying them. The Gonfalonier,

The Pope next gave Cæsar the title of Duke of Romagna,—Imola, Faenza, Forlì, Rimini, Pesaro, and Fano were already included in his dominions, of which Bologna was to be the capital, and which was afterwards to be extended towards Sinigaglia and Urbino, in the hope of later annexing Tuscany as well. But for the present, France placed her veto upon any attempt against Bologna or Tuscany, which, on their side, were actively preparing for defence. Meanwhile, secret negotiations were going on between Spain and France, for the division of the kingdom of Naples between them, and the Pope entered into the arrangements, hoping, with his accustomed greed, to be able to extend his son's power in that direction likewise.

4. Savonarola and the Republic of Florence.

While these events were happening in Rome, the Borgia had planned another tragedy in Florence, where very grave changes had taken place, of which it is now needful to speak.[1]

From the time of Charles VIII.'s Italian expedition, a Dominican friar, prior of St. Mark's convent, and a very remarkable man, had become almost master of the city. Everything indeed that was now done was dictated by the counsels he gave from the pulpit. A native of Ferrara, and coming to Florence during the rule of the Medici, he had preached against the general depravity of manners, and the corruption of the Church, always attacking Pope Alexander more or less covertly, and proving himself to be the champion of liberty. In many respects, he neither was nor seemed to be a man of his time. Having no true classical culture, he detested the Pagan spirit with which all things were then impregnated. Learned in the Bible, the Holy Fathers, and scholastic philosophy, he was animated by the liveliest religious enthusiasm. Steeped in doctrines, at that time held in slight esteem, he wrote verses which, if not particularly well turned, at least were full of Christian ardour. Endowed with great independence of mind and character, and much good sense, yet he often spoke as one who was inspired, for he really believed

also mention it. Burchardi's "Diario" tells us that in June the body of Astorre Manfredi was found in the Tiber with those of two youths, a woman, and several others. There is a notice of Manfredi's death in a despatch of 6th June, 1502, from the Venetian ambassador, Antonio Giustinian. ("Dispacci di Antonio Giustinian," published by P. Villari: Florence, successors Le Monnier, 1876, in 3 vols.)

[1] See my "Storia di Girolamo Savonarola e dei suoi tempi," in 2 vols.: Florence, F. le Monnier, 1859-61. Having already treated this subject at length, I may be allowed to make but brief mention of it here.

On the 22nd and 23rd December a decree was issued for the Consiglio Maggiore, to which all citizens were bidden who were twenty-nine years of age, and were *beneficiati*, that is to say, who enjoyed *the benefit of the State*, or, according to the old laws of the Republic, had the right to govern. Should these exceed the number of 1,500, then a third of them only, in alternation with the other thirds, would form a council from six months to six months.[1] The city had at that time about 90,000 inhabitants; the *beneficed* (*beneficiati*) citizens of the age of twenty-nine numbered 3,200; so that the Great Council was in fact composed of little more than a thousand members.[2] Also every three years sixty *non-beneficed* citizens and twenty-four young men aged twenty-four, were chosen to take part in the Council, "in order to give encouragement to the young and incite them to virtue." The chief function of the Council was the election of magistrates —in which the best guarantee of liberty then consisted—and in voting laws, though without discussing them. Besides this, it was to elect immediately eighty citizens of at least forty years of age, to form the Council of Eighty, a species of Senate to be renewed every six months, and of which the membership belonged of right to some of the principal magistrates. This sat once a week to deliberate, in conjunction with the Signory, on all grave and delicate questions which could not be communicated to the larger assembly. The *Collegi* joined these sittings whenever it was a question of nominating ambassadors and captains, or making arrangements with mercenary leaders.

It was in this manner that the new Republic was constituted. Division of power being then unknown, the attributes of the magistrates were considerably confused. Nevertheless, when a new law required sanction, the following was the usual mode of procedure: the proposal was made by the Signoria, who could—if the matter required it—first call together a so-called *Pratica*, composed of the colleges, the principal magistrates and the *Arroti*, *i.e.*, citizens selected for that special purpose. When this measure was considered unnecessary, application was made at once to the Eighty, and then to the Great Council without farther delay. In the Pratica some discussion of questions took place, but at the Councils members gave their votes without preliminary debate. The same course was pursued with regard

[1] All this is much more minutely detailed in my "Storia di Girolamo Savonarola," to which I must again refer the reader.

[2] According to the law, the minimum was fixed at 500, so that if the *beneficiati* amounted to fewer than 1,500, they were not divided into thirds, but formed the Council altogether. For this reason the Council Hall, then built by Cronaca in the palace of the Signoria, was named the Hall of the Five Hundred.

with the eight Priori forming the Signory, to be renewed every two months, were preserved; and so also the Magistracy of the Eight, which charged with the maintenance of order within the city, was a tribunal for common offences, and more especially for those against the State. The old Magistracy of the Ten for war affairs was likewise preserved. The Gonfaloniers of the Companies and the twelve Worthies, a remnant of old institutions composing the so-called Colleges which gave their assistance to the Signory, without having any real importance, were also maintained. But serious disputes arose regarding the Councils or assemblies of the Republic. The Council of Seventy, organ of the Medicean despotism, was promptly abolished; but it was found impossible to reconstitute those of the people and the Commune, because, under the old Republic, these answered to a state of things, to a division of the citizens which no longer existed, and which it was impossible to renew. Discussions therefore began. A few persons, at whose head was Paolo Antonio Soderini, just returned from Venice, positively proposed a Great Council, open to every citizen, and a less numerous council of *Ottimati*, precisely after the pattern of the Great Council, and of the *Pregadi* of Venice. But this proposal was combated by those who, headed by Guidantonio Vespucci, desired a more restricted form of government; they opposed the institution of the Great Council, which they said might be useful in Venice, where there was an aristocracy which alone composed it, but would be most dangerous to Florence, where, failing the aristocracy, it would be necessary to admit citizens of all ranks. Even, according to Guicciardini, the danger of this great divergence of opinion consisted in this, that should a narrow form of government prevail instead of a moderately liberal one, there would ensue, as a necessary reaction, a government of too democratic a form, which would endanger the Republic. And it was for that reason that this great historian and acute politician took the part of Savonarola,[1] who, precisely at that time, took up the question and rescued everything, by preaching in favour of a *universal government*, with a Great Council on the Venetian plan, but adapted to Florentine needs and customs. The weight of his words speedily brought about the victory of Soderini's proposal, and the friar in consequence obtained so great an ascendency over the people, that from that moment the discussions in the palace and the laws passed frequently seem to be mere copies of his sermons.

[1] As much in his "Storia Fiorentina," as in his treatise, "Del Reggimento di Firenze," published in the "Opere Inedite."

criminis sui.[1] First of all he sent Savonarola a very graciously worded invitation to Rome, which the Friar declined to accept. On this the Pope interdicted him from preaching; but the Ten wrote so urgently in his defence, that—for fear of worse consequences—the brief was revoked. Once more the Pope resorted to flattery, and even the possibility of a Cardinal's hat was suggested; but again the Prior of San Marco refused, and during the Lent of 1496 thundered louder than ever from his pulpit. He predicted future calamities, recurred to the question of church reform, and insisted that Florence must firmly consolidate her popular government, in order to promote both at home and abroad the renovation and triumph of religion cleansed of all corruption.

The matter by this time had assumed such grave proportions, that, stirred by conflicting passions, the eyes of all Italy were turned upon the courageous Friar. All men were convinced of the frightful corruption of the Church, and all understood that notwithstanding the universal and radical religious scepticism of the Italians, things could not long go on as they were. The precursory symptoms of reform already manifest at Constance, at Basle, and elsewhere, were too significant to be forgotten. The enthusiastic, earnest attention with which flippant, sceptical Florence was now listening to Savonarola, inspired in many a confused alarm, and aroused the fierce rage of Alexander VI. He, who had so easily dismissed prelates and cardinals from the world, now saw himself personally attacked by a simple friar, without having the power to punish him

Still the Pope did not despair of turning aside the threatened danger. Savonarola, it is true, was a powerful if rough orator; he was a man of prodigious activity; he wrote an immense number of works, of pamphlets, of letters; he gave himself no rest; daily and several times a-day, he delivered sermons in different churches; his zeal for good was great, his religious enthusiasm most ardent, his power immense. Yet, as we have already remarked, he was not altogether a man of his day; his culture was in part scholastic, his enthusiasm frequently verged upon fanaticism; he beheld visions and believed himself a prophet; sometimes he imagined that the Almighty would make use of him to perform miracles. He was an ardent lover of liberty; but with the true monastic spirit, he yearned for it as a means of promoting religious reform. At times, indeed, he seemed determined to turn all Florence into a conventual establishment, which to many

[1] *Vide* letters before quoted from Capponi to Piero dei Medici, published by Desjardins, "Négociations," &c, vol. 1 p 393, and fol.

to matters of weightier import than the passing of laws—declarations of war, for instance, or the conclusion of some treaty pregnant with the gravest results.

This novel machinery of government soon began to work regularly, and Savonarola, as one of its principal authors, powerfully promoted other important reforms by means of his preachings from the pulpit. The irregular and arbitrary taxes upon real property were replaced by tithes (Decima). Parliament was abolished, for that assembly, having always approved every measure proposed by the Signoria, had frequently been made the docile tool of tyranny and change. The Monte di Pietà was established. A new law was also passed, granting—in State trials—a right of appeal from the Eight to the Great Council; this was, it must be confessed, a highly imprudent act, inasmuch as it entrusted the administration of justice to popular feeling. Savonarola himself was in favour of a more restricted right of appeal, but on this point he was powerless to restrain the people, urged on as they were by his personal enemies. These latter hoped, by means of excesses, to put the Republic in danger, or at least—as they phrased it—to deliver it from the hands of the Friar. After-events proved the inexpediency of the law.

Nevertheless at first public business was carried on with sufficient regularity, nor did other disturbances arise, save those brought about by the war with Pisa, which indeed, not having as yet assumed a very serious character, served to keep the Florentines from quarrelling among themselves It is true that the allies summoned Maximilian, King of the Romans, to the aid of the Pisans; but when they beheld him arrive without an army, they would give him neither money nor men; so that he had to return the way he came, without having achieved anything. But Florence already held the seeds of a very grave danger, destined to be the cause of fatal results. With ever-increasing fervour, Savonarola was urging reformation of manners, and the defence of freedom; he suggested many useful measures, and painted the evils of tyranny in the liveliest colours. But he did not stop here

He also urged the necessity of reforming the Church, which, as all men knew and saw, had lapsed into the most abject corruption. Dogma and even the principle of Papal authority he left untouched, for in fact he never ceased to be a Roman Catholic; but at last he pointed out the need of a Council, and made allusions to Pope Alexander's scandalous mode of life. Thereupon the Pope began to feel serious disquietude at a state of things so novel for Italy, and dangerous for himself, who, as Piero Capponi had previously described him, was of a cowardly nature and *conscius*

this party sided the Arrabbiati, who desired a more restricted form of government, that is, one restricted to Ottimati and the Bigi (Greys), so called, because they did not venture to show their secret object, which was no less than the pure and simple restoration of the Medici.

As yet none of these intrigues endangered either the Republic or Savonarola. The Compagnacci were not a political party; the Ottimati had few followers in Florence, which had always been a democratic city; the Bigi, though with powerful adherents both at home and abroad, had in Piero dei Medici a leader at once too hated and despised, to be desired by many. The first attempt he made to re-enter Florence, where he expected a most favourable reception, ended in his having the city gate contemptuously closed in his face. A conspiracy for the same object got up by Bernardo del Nero and others, ended in their death. All this, however, produced a state of things, in which it was easy for Alexander VI. to find an opportunity for the revenge, that he had so long and so ardently sought.

Savonarola daily hurled fresh bolts against Roman licence, daily he insisted more openly on the necessity of calling together a council, and daily made allusions from the pulpit to the crimes and vices of the Pope. Frequently ordered to be silent, he raised his voice louder and louder. Finally sentence of excommunication was pronounced against him, and this he declared to be null and void, adding that he spoke in the name of the Almighty, and was ready to maintain his own innocence against the whole world; that, however, he despaired of convincing Alexander VI., who, having been elected simoniacally, and stained with so many crimes and scandals, could not be considered as the true Pope This was at the time of the murder of the Duke of Gandia, of the rumour of the Pope's incest with his daughter Lucrezia; and Savonarola was worked up to a frenzy which he neither would nor could moderate He addressed letters to the powers of Europe, urging them to assemble a Council for the salvation of the Church, which, as he would publicly demonstrate, had no true and legitimate head. One of these letters unfortunately fell into the hands of Alexander VI. Still more unfortunately, Charles VIII., who seemed to have repented of his sins and decided to put his hand to the reforms urged by Savonarola, by whom he was regarded as his strongest support, died suddenly in the early part of 1498. And although all this was not known in Italy, still it was already plain that all things were conspiring to the hurt of the poor friar. It was at this moment that an unexpected opportunity occurred which the Pope unhesitatingly seized.

must have appeared an almost childish illusion. He was surrounded by artists and men of learning, over whom, as over both people and politicians, he exercised an extraordinary ascendency. But while loving culture and encouraging the arts, he was a most bitter enemy of the pagan spirit that then impregnated and corrupted all things. Among his friars, as among his followers outside the convent, were men of lofty character and commanding energy; but there were also not a few weak and superstitious spirits, to exaggerate the ideas of their master, who was not entirely free from exaggeration himself. The immense power which he had acquired in Florence through the wisdom of his political advice, the nobility of his mind, his irresistible eloquence, were more strengthened by the wonder awakened by the singularity of his character, than by his success in arousing in Florence a veritable religious fervour. And it was upon this point that Savonarola greatly deceived himself, and failed therefore to see that he was in fact building upon sand; he desired a free government to promote religious reform, and the Florentines accepted religious reform, only for the better consolidation of a free government Hence the base of his power was less solid than it seemed, and the Pope could not fail to find ways to create new parties and foment strife.

A considerable number of young men, lovers of the gay living so much in favour under the Medici, and now held in such bitter reprobation, banded together under the name of the Compagnacci (Bad Fellows) for the purpose of ridiculing the Friar and his friends whom they styled Piagnoni (Snivellers), Frateschi, &c, and of combating them by every means in their power. So in 1497, it came about that while this party made an attempt to revive the old Medicean carnival with its bacchanalian revels and indecencies, on the other hand the exhortations of Savonarola and his followers inspired bands of children to scour the streets and houses of Florence in search of *vanities*, namely, books, writings, drawings, and sculpture of a licentious character; all carnival dresses and masks. The 7th of February and last day of carnival, was celebrated by a solemn procession, that terminated with the famous *burning of the vanities*, which were collected together in the Piazza of the Signoria, and heaped up on the stages of a great wooden pyramid constructed for the purpose. As was very natural, this affair gave rise to numerous accusations and much ridicule on the part of the Compagnacci, although this singular solemnity not only had the sanction of the chief authorities, but was almost directed by them, in order that it might be conducted with dignity and decorum. Indeed the Campagnacci loudly blamed the government for taking part in monkish shows. With

The Signory then in office was hostile to Savonarola ; continued encouragement from abroad had increased the audacity of the Arrabbiati and the Compagnacci, the Bigi were always ready for anything that meant harm to the Republic, some even of the Piagnoni were disturbed by the fierceness of the conflict with the Pope, when a singular occurrence took place, of which no one could foresee the tremendous results. Francesco di Puglia, a Franciscan monk, in the course of a furious sermon against Savonarola in the Church of Santa Croce, declared himself ready to go through the ordeal of fire with him and thereby prove the falsity of the Friar's doctrines.

To Savonarola the affair appeared so strange and unseemly, that he disregarded it ; but not so his disciple Brother Domenico Buonvicini of Pescia. This friar, a man of small wits, but earnest, energetic and possessed with a burning zeal, accepted the challenge and unhesitatingly declared his readiness to go through the trial by fire in order to prove the truth of his master's doctrines. Francesco di Puglia replied that he had challenged Savonarola, and with him alone would he enter the fire ; Frà Domenico must be content to make the trial with Giuliano Rondinelli another Franciscan. The matter unfortunately went on notwithstanding Savonarola's attempts to put a stop to it ; Frà Domenico had fallen readily into the trap set for him, and Savonarola himself was not entirely disinclined to believe in the success of the experiment, convinced as he was of holding a mission from God and of being inspired by him to preach the doctrines which were now disputed. The Arrabbiati and the Compagnacci pushed the matter on with all their might, for they hoped to crush the Piagnoni by ridicule, and to accomplish the murder of Savonarola in the tumult for which they were making preparations. They were helped in this by the Signoria, now in secret agreement with Rome.

Accordingly this extraordinary experiment or ordeal—an evident anachronism in the fifteenth century—was fixed for the 7th of April, 1498. At the hour arranged, the monks came in procession to the Piazza in front of the Palace, where everything had been ordered by the Signoria, and where an immense crowd had gathered, impatient to witness a spectacle that recalled the Middle Ages. Savonarola, finally persuaded that Frà Domenico's fiery zeal, against which he had vainly combated, was a veritable inspiration from on high, had consented to lead his brethren. However, when all was ready on their side, and Frà Domenico of Pescia awaited the signal to enter the fire, the Franciscans, whose only object was to lay a trap for their adversaries, began to hesitate,

were burnt, and their ashes thrown into the Arno, in the presence of an applauding rabble of boys.

Throughout this drama there was a strange mixture of elements; of the really heroic with the merely ephemeral. The faith of Savonarola, his zeal for the general good, his self-abnegation, were simply heroic; mighty was his eloquence, wonderful his political wisdom; merely ephemeral, on the other hand, the *religious* ardour which he believed that he had aroused in the Florentine people. In point of fact they had only been stirred to a love of liberty, and had listened with enthusiasm to the religious teachings of the Friar as long as these continued to give strength to the popular government. But as soon as they beheld in him a source of danger to the Republic, they had little hesitation in giving him up to the Pope. And certainly, no sooner had the unhappy Friar ceased to breathe, than all the dangers which had from all sides recently threatened the government which he had founded, seemed suddenly to melt away. The allies spoke no more of re-instating Piero dei Medici; the Pope, in high good humour, sent praises and held out hopes; Valentinois seemed to have renounced all idea of invading Tuscany, and Florence hoped to be able to turn all her attention to the war against Pisa, without having to think of other matters.

It was not long before she saw the vanity of these hopes, and that much more was needed to satiate the unquenchable avidity of the Borgia. But there was no longer any remedy. She could only repent having stifled the one voice that was ever raised in defence of her liberty; of having unjustly, iniquitously destroyed a man who had done so much good, and would have done so much more to the cause of Florence, of liberty, of religion. To many his death rendered him a saint and a martyr, and for more than a century his memory was admired and worshipped by numbers in Florence, who, during subsequent perils of their country, showed themselves worthy followers of their master, and shed the glow of their heroism over the last moments of the Republic. However, that was in the future; in the May of 1498 the Arrabbiati were triumphant, although they did not dare to change the form of government planned by Savonarola. On the contrary, it was consolidated. Still the Piagnoni continued to be persecuted, and many of them were driven out of whatever offices they held to make room for their declared adversaries and new men. At this moment a personage appeared upon the scene, and obtained official employ, who was certainly greater than Savonarola, if of a very different order of greatness. To him we must now turn our undivided attention.

that his judges wished him to say, Frà Domenico, on the contrary, unconquered either by threats or torture, remained nobly consistent, unshrinkingly proclaiming his steadfast faith in his beloved master. Recourse was accordingly had to the common and easy expedient of altering as much as possible the very confessions extorted in the torture chamber, without however being able even in this way to find reasonable grounds for condemnation.

Meanwhile the Pope was sending furious letters demanding either that the Friars should be sent to Rome where he would know how to deal with them, or that they should be put to death without further delay. In fact the Signoria had neither will nor power to abandon its cruel purpose. As, however, two months had already passed, and it was time, according to the Florentine laws, for a new Signoria to come into office, the present one employed itself solely in providing that the new elections should be favourable to the Arrabbiati; and this was easily contrived. The freshly elected magistrates speedily agreed with the Pope, that he should send two Apostolic Commissioners to Florence to bring the trial to a satisfactory conclusion; finding grounds that is, for capital punishment, more especially as regarded the accusal of heresy. Savonarola in the meantime, during this interval of quiet in his prison, had written several religious pamphlets, in which, while re-asserting all his doctrines he once more declared himself to be in all things, as he had ever been, a most faithful and unshaken believer in the Roman Catholic faith. But that mattered nothing; his death had been resolved upon.

On the 19th of May the Apostolic Commissioners arrived with the order that *were he another St. John the Baptist* he must be condemned to death. They began the mock trial again, torturing Savonarola even more cruelly than at first. And although, notwithstanding his bodily weakness, he now endured the agony better than before, and no good reason could be found for condemning him, yet without delay the Commissioners sentenced him and his companions to death, and handed them over to the secular arm, showing no mercy even to Maruffi, who had vilely slandered and denied his master, making every admission that was suggested to him. A friar more or less mattered little, they said. And certainly there would have been little prudence in sparing the life of so weak and shallow a man, who later might have revealed, even unwittingly, the shameless falsification of the trials. Accordingly, on the 23rd of May, 1498, a great platform was erected in the piazza of the Signoria, with a cross at one end on which the three friars were hung; Savonarola in the middle, between the other two. The instant they had breathed their last, their corpses

BOOK THE FIRST.

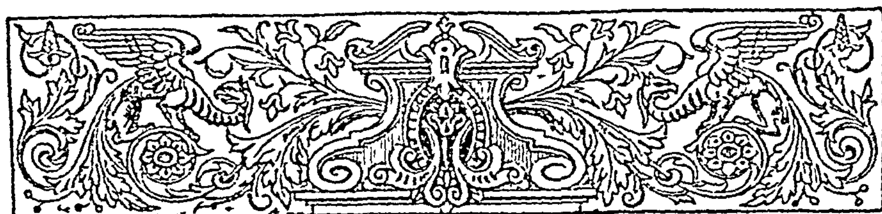
FROM THE BIRTH OF NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI TO HIS DISMISSAL FROM THE OFFICE OF SECRETARY OF THE TEN.

(1469–1512.)

colouring his lies to suit the times;"[1] but he failed to comprehend how he had gained so great a power in Florence, nor how the affair would end, wherefore he besought his friend to enlighten him upon the subject if possible. What manner of man, then, was this who remained a cold inquirer in the midst of these seething popular passions? Remembering the no inconsiderable part that he played in after-years in the affairs of his Republic, and his very considerable part in the history of modern thought, the smallest particulars of his youth and his studies would be very precious But the early years of Machiavelli remain, perhaps always will remain, involved in obscurity. He is seldom mentioned by his contemporaries, and after his death none of his friends or acquaintances thought of writing his life. And he, continually occupied in the observation of contemporary men and events, never refers to himself, never alludes to his own past. As a man, as an individual character, he does not appear to have exercised much influence upon those about him; his actions were either of little importance or excited little remark. Even his prodigious business activity was chiefly of the pen; it may be said that his life was nearly all in his writings, although he went through many and varied experiences. In this he is very different from Guicciardini, whom he resembles in many other respects. The latter, in fact, having attained to an elevated office, made his power and personal authority very clearly felt. Assailed by many contemporaries, he defended himself in his "Apologia," in his "Ricordi Biografici," and in other writings, in which he often speaks at length of himself. However, we shall now try to put together all the information we have been able to collect relating to Machiavelli's family and early life. Unfortunately it is extremely scanty.

Machiavelli came of a very old Tuscan family, originally of Montespertoli, a small commune, situated between the Val d'Elsa and the Val di Pesa, at a short distance from Florence. In their family records—"Quaderno di ricordanze," some of which are still to be found in the libraries of Florence—we read that the Machiavelli were allies of the lords of Montespertoli, and positively descended from the same stock. According to these *ricordanze*, about the year 1120 a certain Buoninsegna, son of Dono dei

[1] This letter, the second in every edition of Machiavelli's Works, bears the date of the 8th of March, 1497. It is, however, well known that, down to the middle of the last century, the Florentines dated the year *ab incarnatione*, that is, beginning it on the 25th of March. The first letter, to which we shall refer later, is followed in the "Opere" by a Latin fragment, not generally numbered. In all quotations from the "Opere," the reader will understand that we refer to the Italian edition of 1813, unless another be specially indicated.



CHAPTER I.

Birth and Early Studies of Niccolò Machiavelli—His election as Secretary of the Ten.

(1469–1498.)



NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI makes his first appearance in history in the year 1498, the twenty-ninth of his age. At that period the storm was already gathering which a few months later brought Savonarola to the scaffold. The Signoria was hostile to the Friar; the sentence of excommunication against him had already reached Florence. For the prevention of scandal, he had ordered his faithful disciple, Frà Domenico of Pescia, to preach in San Lorenzo to the women, while he himself had left the Duomo, and retired to San Marco, where he delivered his sermons to male hearers only. It was there that Machiavelli came to hear two sermons, of which he sent details to a friend in Rome, in a letter dated the 8th of March of the same year. In this we already find certain noteworthy characteristics of an intellect not merely different from, but opposed to, that of Savonarola. He could not understand that there was anything great or noble in the Friar. He listened with a smile of irony and scorn to the strange words of the man whom he afterwards described as the *weaponless prophet*. He heard him slashing at "your books, oh priests, and treating you in a way that even dogs would not submit to;" he heard him say of the Pope "everything that can be said of any great villain;" as it appeared to him "this Friar is

exile in 1260,[1] after the defeat at Montaperto. But they returned to Florence with the other Guelphs, and are frequ mentioned in the history of the Republic, in whose govern they shared, being able to boast of a large number of prior gonfaloniers[2]

Bernardo, son of Niccolò Machiavelli, born in 1428, was a consult, and filled for some time the office of treasurer in Marca,[3] in 1450 he inherited the property of his uncle Totto of Buoninsegna Machiavelli[4] In 1458 he married Bartolom widow of Niccolò Bennizzi, and daughter of Stefano dei Ne old Florentine family. It cannot be supposed that this mar increased his personal property, for in those days women bro very scanty dowers However that may be, in the Catas 1498, his income—all of which, as we shall see later, passed t son Niccolò in 1511, according to a stipulated agreement- valued at 110 broad florins and 14 pence,[5] so that, if not a wea

velli, had married Giovanni dei Ricci, and thus was mother of Giuliano dei author of the "Priorista," and collector of many memorials and papers conc his illustrious ancestor. (*Vide* Baldelli, "Elogio di Niccolò Machiavelli," L 1794, pp. 86, 87) Another branch of the Machiavelli was extinguisl Florence, in the year 1727, by the death of Francesco Maria dei Mach The inheritance passed to the Rangoni of Modena, who for that reason bo name of Rangoni-Machiavelli.

Count Passerini, first in his notes to Ademollo's romance, "Marietta dei] and then in the essay prefixed to the new edition of Machiavelli's "Opere i.: Florence, Cenniniana Press, 1873), asserts that Machiavelli's consanguini the lords of Montespertoli was a fable invented in the days of the Principa order to flatter the ambition of the Machiavelli, who were then powerful. is clear, the circumstance is of much older origin

See also the "Monografia storica e statistica del Commune di Montesp compilata dall Avv. Marcello Nardi-Dei," Florence, Co-operative Press, Among other notices, at p 21, a document is quoted proving that on the tion, towards the end of the fourteenth century, of the seigneurial family lords of Montespertoli, by the decease of Ciango d'Agnolo, he named as h *pro indiviso* Lorenzo and Buoninsegna, children of Filippo Machiavelli.

[1] Giovanni Villani ("Cronica," vol i. book viii. chap 80, Florence, 1847), in giving the list of those then sent into exile, places the Macl "among the *popolani* of the said Sesto (Oltrarno), notable houses" Th notice is to be found in Ammirato, "Delle famiglie nobili fiorentine" (Fl 1615), at p. 12, "Famiglia Soderini."

[2] G Baldelli, "Elogio" &c., in note 6, at pp 86, 87, tells us that the M velli had twelve gonfaloniers and fifty priors. Ricci, in his "Priorista," rates fifty-seven priors; but it must be observed that here several names are repeated over and over again, even in the same year

[3] *Vide* Baldelli, "Elogio," &c., and the "Life" prefixed to Machi Works in the Florence edition of 1782

[4] *Vide* the "Libro di Ricordanze," by Ristoro Machiavelli, from wh have already quoted.

[5] Equal to 132 *sealed* florins, 16 soldi, and 10 denari, the which sum pai or decima of 11 florins, 1 soldo, 5 denari. *Vide* the two documents publis

Machiavelli, was the father of two sons, Castellano and Dono From the former were descended the Castellani, lords of Montespertoli; from the latter those who bore the name of Machiavelli. A spread eagle, field azure, was the arms of the first; that of the second a cross azure, field argent, with four nails, likewise azure, at the four corners of the cross. In 1393 Ciango dei Castellani of Montespertoli bequeathed to Buoninsegna and Lorenzo, children of Filippo Machiavelli, the celebrated author's great-great-grandfather, the castle of Montespertoli, with rights of patronage over many churches. This inheritance, though of little value—feudal rights being then abolished—brought the Machiavelli certain privileges, as, for instance, the monopoly of the public scales and measures, a yearly offering of wax candles, and the permission to affix their arms to the well on the market-place which now bears their name. The property itself was of no great value, and was divided among the many branches of the numerous family. Very little, therefore, came into the hands of Niccolò Machiavelli's father, whose own lands were in the neighbouring commune of San Casciano. But he still preserved certain barren rights upon the castle, and rights of patronage over various churches, belonging in part to the Montespertoli inheritance.[1] The Machiavelli also possessed houses in the quarter of Sto. Spirito, near Santa Felicità and the Ponte Vecchio in Florence, where they had long been established, and were among the most notable of the *popolani*.[2] Indeed, we find them among those who had to go into

[1] The house in which Machiavelli lived and died is the present No. 16, Via Guicciardini, Florence.

[2] In the Marucelliana Library in Florence (Cod. 229, A. 10), is the "Quaderno," or Book of Records of Ristoro, son of Lorenzo, who was the son of Niccolò Machiavelli. This Niccolò, who was the son of Alessandro, was several times member of the Signoria and of the Ten, and was a contemporary of the great writer, but of another branch of the family. The two have occasionally been confused with each other, and thereby many mistakes have arisen. Ristoro's Book of Records begins on the 1st of September, 1538, and contains, besides family accounts, several important notices, part of which are copied from the most ancient of the family records. Thus, there are notes written by Lorenzo Machiavelli, and others still older, extracted from a "Record" by Bernardo, son of Niccolò Machiavelli, written in the year 1460. And it is in this Record that the father of our Machiavelli, nine years before the birth of his son, notes down the family genealogy. Part of these records are corroborated by Giuliano dei Ricci in his "Priorista," a manuscript in which he frequently speaks of the Machiavelli family, to whom he was related. (*Vide* in the National Library of Florence the "Priorista," by Giuliano dei Ricci: Quartiere Santo Spirito, Sesto d'Oltrarno, Machiavelli.)

The branch to which our Machiavelli belonged was extinguished in the beginning of the seventeenth century by the death of Ippolita, daughter of Alessandro, who was the son of Bernardo, Niccolò's third son. Married in 1608 to Pier Francesco dei Ricci, she died in 1613. Bacchia, the daughter of Niccolò Machia

December of 1497,[1] both upon the same subject. From the days of Pope John XXIII., the Machiavelli had had in their gift the living of Santa Maria della Fagna, in the Mugello. The Pazzi were now trying to usurp this right, and therefore the Machiavelli family, although Bernardo was still living, commissioned his son Niccolò to petition for their common rights. Thus we have the two letters "*to a Roman prelate*," who was probably Cardinal of Perugia, since it was to him that the Republican Government wrote urgently upon the same subject[2] In these letters, Machiavelli, with much acumen, much flattery, and many promises to the prelate, asserts in grandiloquent language the just rights which the *Maciavellorum familia* had charged him to defend, and which, in fact, were ultimately triumphant.

In this way two things are clearly proved to us—1st, that Niccolò then knew and wrote the Latin tongue, a fact which some had considered doubtful, 2nd, that all the Machiavelli held him in high esteem since they chose him for their representative and defender. Among the scanty and often contradictory notices which have come down to us, it is quite necessary to dwell upon those which are undoubtedly authentic. It is certainly no matter for astonishment that a man, so singularly gifted by nature, should have already possessed a satisfactory amount of literary instruction; especially, too, when we remember that he came of a family deficient neither in means nor in culture; that he had passed his youth under the rule of Lorenzo the Magnificent, when schools and public university lectures abounded, when Italian and Latin literature could be learnt almost unconsciously, even in daily conversation, and reminiscences of antiquity were in the very air which men breathed. It would have been strange indeed if, as some have pretended, on the faith of Giovio's little trustworthy assertions, Machiavelli had been at that time utterly wanting in culture, only acquiring later from Marcello Virgilio Adriani all

"Risposta fatta ad uno ambasciatore pel re di Francia," dated 1495, and by some attributed, with no reason, to Machiavelli Machiavelli was in the habit of collecting documents of all kinds for his studies, especially for his "Storie," and Ricci copied and preserved them Hence one must be cautious of attributing all these to Machiavelli

[1] They are the first of Machiavelli's published letters. Among the "Machiavelli Papers," preserved in the Florence National Library in six cases, there is a letter speaking of another *patronato* of the family, but unsigned, and, although in Niccolò's hand, speaking of him as of a third person *Vide* Appendix, document 1.

[2] This is proved by a document quoted by Nitti, "Machiavelli nella vita e nelle opere": Naples, 1876, vol 1. p. 39. This Cardinal of Perugia must have been Giovanni Lopez, a Spaniard.

neither was he a poor man. It is impossible to make a perfectly exact calculation; but considering the much higher value of gold in those days, we may venture, without being far from the truth, to estimate this income as about equal to four or five thousand francs[1] of our present currency. Bernardo was a studious man, and Bartolommea a pious woman, evidently of some culture, since she composed certain religious verses and hymns to the Blessed Virgin, dedicated, as we find it asserted, to her son Niccolò[2] Four children were the issue of this marriage: Totto, Niccolò, Primerana, and Ginevra. The elder daughter was married to Messer Francesco Vernacci, the second to Messer Bernardo Minerbetti. It is not known if the elder son Totto, born in 1463, ever married, and he soon fell into obscurity. Niccolò, on the contrary, born the 3rd of May, 1469, speedily, as we shall see, became the most influential member of the family, by reason of his acquirements, as well as of his natural ability. The death of Machiavelli's mother took place on the 11th of October, 1496, yet, not even touching this—one of the most serious events in a man's life—do we find a single word to enlighten us as to what he felt on the occasion. All is entirely hidden from us. At that time he was already twenty-six years of age, yet up to that period we have not a single line from his pen, nor a single word from other writers, giving any information about him.[3]

The very first words we have from his pen consist of one letter in Italian, and a fragment of another in Latin, both written in the

Passerini in the first volume of the "Opere di M Machiavelli," quoted above, pp lviii and lx. This edition was commenced by Sigri. Passerini and Fanfani in 1863. Signor Fanfani having withdrawn, Signor Gaetano Milanesi replaced him, and with Passerini's collaboration has already brought out five volumes. Henceforth, for the sake of brevity, we shall quote this edition as follows—"Opere" (P. M).

[1] The florin of ordinary gold, somewhat smaller than the broad florin, had the same value and same amount of alloy as the more modern zecchin. Estimating this at 12 Italian livres, and admitting that gold at that time had four times its present value, a much higher figure would be reached. This, however, is almost a chance calculation, since it is well known how much even the most careful writers differ as to the relative value of gold in our time and in the fifteenth century.

[2] "Discorso del Senatore G. B. Nelli, con la vita del medesimo," Florence, Paperini and Co., 1753, p. 8. The Nelli library seems to have been divided among the heirs.

[3] There is a small fragment from Machiavelli's pen of a very free translation of the "Historia persecutionis vandalicae" of Vittore Vitense. Passerini, without giving any proofs, states that it was written before 1494; but nothing being known about it, it may be attributed to any year, and, from its style, may be believed to be a youthful production. The Ricci manuscript, to which we shall refer later, and which comprises many writings by, and relating to, Machiavelli, contains a

ion of his day, by no means that of a man of learning, and
is wide knowledge of Greek authors was gained from trans-
; neither would it appear that he had gone very far in the
of law, of which, however, he had evidently some knowledge.[1]

by me, Marco Martini, in this year 1726, from the copy of the Abbe Çorso
ci The whole copy was made by Giuliano dei Ricci from the original
of Niccolò Machiavelli, and this copy by Rosso Antonio Martini has been
with the above-mentioned copy of Giuliano dei Ricci." The same words
e seen in the other copy, but partially scratched out.

us much at least may be presumed from his relations having entrusted him
e defence of their rights concerning Santa Maria della Fagna, and from
her business of a similar nature which he took in hand long afterwards.
her might have early initiated him in these studies, concerning which, how-
o mention is to be found in Machiavelli's works.

inus, in his work, "Florentinische Historiographie," before quoted by us,
s in long and somewhat exaggerated reflections on the injury to Machia-
tudies and even to his genius, resulting, in his opinion, from the great writer's
ce of the Greek language and literature. On the other hand, Professor
fillis, first in his work entitled "Niccolò Machiavelli and the Greek Authors"
, 1875), and shortly after in another on Machiavelli's "Vita di Castruccio
ani," published in the "Archivio Veneto," believes to have triumphantly
that Machiavelli understood Greek, and studied Greek authors in the
l These two works certainly show that the Florentine Secretary made
se of those writers; but, in our opinion, are not sufficient proof that his
studies were carried on in the original language instead of in translations
ror of Professor Triantafillis lay in believing it sufficient to consult Hoff-
"Lexicon Bibliographicum," and when in this he finds no mention of a
tion of some author known to have existed in Machiavelli's time, and of
the latter availed himself, he takes it for granted that no such translation
, and that the author was studied in the original. It is clear that no certain
can be obtained by this method, since in that century numerous translations
ade, which were unpublished and even unknown In fact, of some of the
s of which Triantafillis believes no translations to have been made at that
, several exist in the Florence libraries, and nothing forbids us to think that
velli may have made use of these and of others unknown to us Professor
afillis also endeavours to prove at length that the dialogue "Dell'ira o dei
i curarla" is almost a translation from Plutarch, without at all endeavouring
rtain if there be any foundation for the opinion of those writers who affirmed
e work was not by Machiavelli. Neither does he seem to be aware that
s in the Laurentian Library an ancient translation of this very pamphlet of
ch's, attributed to Colluccio Salutati, and of which Machiavelli might have
l himself.

refore, Professor Triantafillis' two works, however praiseworthy in other
ts, in nowise alter the state of the question, and do not change our own
n, which is also that most generally approved. We may add that Ricci in
Priorista" tells us that Machiavelli composed a treatise in the form of a
y entitled "Le Maschere," which was afterwards lost. In this, continues
the author, incited by M. Virgilio, imitated "The Clouds" and other
ies of Aristophanes, and made it a vehicle for bitter satire on many of his
nporaries. This fact might be adduced in favour of the opposite argument
t maintained by us; but even this would be a very weak argument, since it
refer to a generical imitation, which might have been grounded on the
n or written commentaries of M Virgilio himself or some other professor of
iversity.

that he introduced into his works of Greek or Latin authors. But, on the other hand, although Machiavelli was already a fair scholar in his youth, and, as time went on, made much progress in the classics, and gained not a little by his intimacy with Marcello Virgilio, we cannot believe the assertions of those who credit him with profound learning and Grecian scholarship.[2] Whether he knew or did not know the elements of Greek, can neither be affirmed nor denied, and it is a point of no importance It is certain that he diligently studied translations of Greek authors, and made use of them in his writings; but of his ability to read them in the original—a point which it would certainly be very desirable to know—we have no satisfactory proofs whatever. Amid his numerous Latin quotations, we never meet with one in Greek; we have some translations of his from the Latin, but not *a single page purporting to be translated from the Greek, nor does* he ever mention having read a single author in that tongue Besides, it is certain that his contemporaries did not rank him among the men of learning; Varchi indeed speaks of him as one "rather not without letters, than lettered."[3] Giuliano dei Ricci a descendant of Niccolò on his mother's side, and who collected all obtainable information about him, combated Giovio's assertion by proving that his illustrious ancestor was really acquainted with Latin, without, however, saying a word as to Greek.[4] In short, from all that we know with certainty, it may be concluded that Niccolò Machiavelli received in his youth the ordinary literary

[1] Giovio's brief "Elogio" begins thus—"Quis non miretur in hoc Macciavello tantum valuisse naturam, *ut in nulla vel certe mediocri latinarum literarum cognitione*, ad justam recte scribendi facultatem pervenire potuerit . . . ?" And further on—"Constat eum, sicuti ipse nobis fatebatur, a Marcello Virgilio, cuius et notarius et assecla publici muneris fuit, graecae atque latinae linguæ flores accepisse quos scriptis suis insereret." ("Elogia doctorum virorum," auctore Paulo Jovio: Antuerpiae, 1557, pp 192–93.) These very inexact assertions, too common in Giovio, were the origin of those afterwards repeated by many other writers.

[2] "He knew Greek and Latin perfectly," says Passerini at p. xi of the "Discorso," prefixed to the "Opere" (P. M); but he makes the assertion without proving it, and without alluding to the disputes of noted authors on the subject.

[3] "Storia di Firenze": Florence, Pazzi, 1851, vol i. p. 266.

[4] Giuliano dei Ricci, in the manuscript already quoted (and of which there are two copies in the Florence National Library), observes that there is no foundation for Giovio's remarks; that Machiavelli was never the notary of Marcello Virgilio, but secretary to the Ten; that the fragment of the Latin letter written by him in December, 1497, proves his knowledge of Latin. That fragment, Ricci tells us, is only the eighth part of the whole, the rest having been lost through the tearing of the sheet. At that period Niccolò Machiavelli "had hardly begun to know, much less to be intimate with Virgilio." *Vide* the MS. marked No. 692, among the Palatine MSS., pp. 8–10. Both copies of this MS. seem to be by the same hand. At the end of one of them is written, "The present volume has been

also their duty to despatch ambassadors to foreign countries, and to keep up a correspondence with them; but in these matters they worked in conjunction with or rather subordinated to the Signory. Thus the second Chancery was often at the orders of the first, and when, as frequently happened, the Ten were not elected, then the two chanceries were almost fused together under the direction of the first secretary.[1]

Towards the end of 1497 the death occurred of Bartolommeo Scala, a celebrated man of learning, long secretary of the Republic, and Marcello Virgilio Adriani was nominated in his stead in the February of 1498, with a yearly stipend of 330 florins.[2] Shortly afterwards, Alessandro Braccesi, another secretary of the Signoria, but placed in the second Chancery, was dismissed from office, and it was then that four names were put to the vote, first in the Council of Eighty, and four days later—that is on the 19th June—in the great Council. Among these names we find that of Niccolò, son of Bernardo Machiavelli; he it was who gained the greater number of votes, and was elected

[1] This much is ascertained from the examination of the registers of the Republic in the Florentine Archives The missions and instructions to ambassadors from 1499 to 1512 are sometimes in the name of the Signory, sometimes of the Ten, or even occasionally of both (Florence Archives, class x. department 1. No. 105). The Ten were often delegated to reply to letters addressed to the Signoria. According to the statute of 1415 (printed in 1781, and dated from Fribourg, vol. ii. p. 25, and fol.), the Ten have the power of nominating syndics, procurators, ambassadors, secretaries, &c They have, however, no power to appoint ambassadors to the Pope or emperor, or to a king or queen, without the consent of the priors and colleges

[2] "Bartolomei Scalæ Collensis, Vita," auctore Dominico Maria Mannio: Florentiæ, 1768

Passerini in his "Discorso" at *page* xii, "Opere" (P. M.), affirms that Machiavelli, "desiring of entering into his country's service, placed himself about 1494, under the direction of Marcello Virgilio Adriani, in the second Chancery of the Commune" But we do not know where he could have discovered that Machiavelli and Marcello Virgilio were already in office before 1498, and neither does he quote any authority.

It is true that by a deliberation of 28th December, 1494 ("Deliberazione dei Signori," reg 86, a. c, 120), it would seem that then, on the formation of a new government, Bartolommeo Scala and others received their dismissal. But on the 31st December the priors "*attenta* capsatione facta perdictos Dominos de domino Bart. Sch, et *attenta* necessitate Palatii et negotiis eiusdem," re-elect him chancellor of the first Chancery, together with Pietro Beccanugi, who had replaced him. And thus he remained in office until 1497, as Manni too affirms in his "Life" of him. And in the reforms of the Chancery, passed in the Great Council on the 13th February, 1498 (*new style*), it is decreed that the first chancellor, the post held by Bartolommeo Schale, "should have a salary of 330 florins, and a little further on the decree mentions the secretaries of the Signoria, and alludes to the secretaryship," in which Alessandro Braccesi has served. "Braccesi in fact had just then been dismissed" ("Provvisioni," reg. 187, sheets 56-58)

He acquired all else later in life by private reading, by meditation, and above all by practical experience and knowledge of mankind. His comparatively restricted culture must doubtless have been a drawback to him; but it also had the inestimable advantage of preserving the spontaneous originality of his genius and his style, and preventing them from being suffocated, as frequently happened at that period, beneath a dead weight of erudition.

And even his ardent enthusiasm for the ancients, and especially for the Romans, rather reminds us of that of Cola di Rienzo and Stefano Porcaro, than of that of a man of learning, pure and simple. Living too in that age of letters, fine arts, conspiracies, papal scandals, and foreign invasions, he did not dwell alone with his books, but in continual conversation and meditation on the events going on so swiftly around him. And among these events, it is certain that the coming of the French in 1494 must have made a very deep and painful impression upon him, an impression mitigated only partially by the expulsion of the Medici, and the proclamation of the Republic in Florence. For, with his pagan reminiscences and sympathies, and his most profound aversion for everything savouring of priesthood or monkery, he could not reconcile himself to the circumstance of the Republic being ruled by the eloquence of a friar, and his inclinations bent towards the friar's executioners. Later in his writings we meet with some expressions of admiration for Savonarola, but these expressions are not entirely free from irony. When the friar's ashes were cast into the Arno, and the Piagnoni were objects of persecution, matters were more congenial to his ideas. Then, as was natural, many changes took place in the public offices, and Machiavelli, who at twenty nine was still without a profession and without an income of his own, set about seeking for an occupation that would bring him fair remuneration for his work. He cannot have had much difficulty, since his views were not too ambitious, and the Republic had long been accustomed to employ men of letters in salaried posts, especially as secretaries.

The chief secretary's office was that of the Signory, at the head of which was the official properly known as the Secretary, or Chancellor of the Republic. This was a very honourable office, entrusted to men like Poggio Bracciolini, Leonardo Aretino, and so on. Then came the second Chancery, that of the Ten, which although having an importance of its own, was dependent to a certain extent upon the first. The Ten combined the functions of a War Office, and in part of Ministry for Home affairs, and consequently had an enormous amount of business to transact. It was

called the old school, and notwithstanding the duties of his office, never abandoned the classical studies which were the constant theme of his conversation and correspondence with his friends.[1]

Very different was Machiavelli. Of middle height, slender figure, with sparkling eyes, dark hair, rather a small head, a slightly aquiline nose, a tightly closed mouth: all about him bore the impress of a very acute observer and thinker, but not that of one able to wield much influence over others.[2] He could

[1] Angelo Maria Bandini, "Collectio veterum aliquot monumentorum:" Aretii, 1752. In the preface he speaks of Marcello Virgilio, of whom a eulogium also may be found in vol. iii of the "Elogi storici degli Uomini illustri Toscani:" *Florence, 1766-73*

In the above-mentioned preface Bandini says: "Id vero in Marcello mirum fuit quod etsi publici florentinam iuventutem humanioribus literis erudiret, nomine tamen reipublicae literas scribendi munus nunquam intermiserit." This preface is followed by letters addressed to Marcello by Calcondila (1496), and by Roberto Acciaioli, by Aldo Manuzio (1499), and by Cardinal Soderini (1508), all on the subject of classical research, discoveries of ancient monuments, &c. *Vide* too Prezziner's "Storia del pubblico Studio," &c., vol. i. pp 181, 187, and 190; Fabroni's "Historia Academiæ Pisanæ," vol. i. pp. 95, 375, and 377. By an unpublished letter from Marcello Virgilio to Machiavelli, to be quoted further on, it is plainly to be seen that even in 1502 when the latter was with Cæsar Borgia, the former was at the head of the first secretary's office, and was continuing to give lectures.

In 1515 Adriani had a fall from his horse, and suffered much in consequence, not only his eyes, but his speech also remaining affected to the end of his life. This is mentioned by Valeriani, "De literatorum infelicitate;" Venetiis, 1630, p. 71, and by Bandini at p. xix of his before-quoted preface. Regarding this scholar's works, see the printed catalogue of the Laurentian Library in Florence, compiled and illustrated by Bandini and Moreni, "Bibliografia toscana."

Marcello died in 1521 at the age of 56 years, and was buried in the family tomb at the Franciscan church at San Miniato al Monte, which Michael Angelo styled *La Bella villanella*. Here is his monument and bust beneath which is written:

"Suprema nomen hoc solo
Tantum voluntas iusserat
Poni, sed hanc statuam prius
Erexit hæres, nescius
Famæ futurum et gloriæ
Aut nomen aut nihil satis."

It is possible that the concluding words may have suggested the beautiful inscription afterwards placed on Machiavelli's tomb in the church of Santa Croce. Marcello Virgilio's son, Gio Battista, the historian, and his grandson filled the same chair as their father and grandfather. So little is generally known about Marcello Virgilio, that I have tried here to put together a few notices concerning him.

[2] In the gallery of the Uffizi there is preserved a plaster cast, which is said to have been executed on Machiavelli's corpse, solely on the ground of its having been discovered during the present century, in the house of Machiavelli, in Via Guicciardini. It is also asserted that Bartolini made use of this cast, whilst

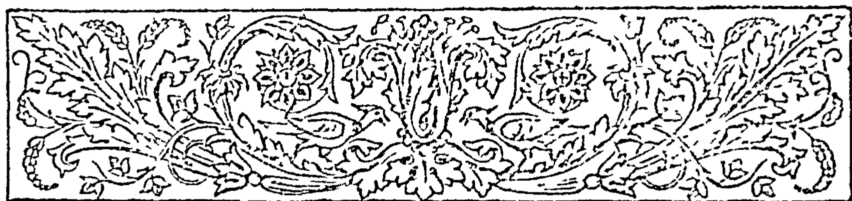
with the yearly stipend of 192 florins.[1] On the 14th of July in the same year, his nomination was confirmed by the Signory, and he was transferred to the second Chancery, at the head of which he remained until the downfall of the Republican Government in 1512. This promotion must have increased his stipend to 200 florins, that being the fixed salary of the second Chancellor.[2] But it is necessary to remark that, according to the law, these florins were only worth four livres each, and not seven like the ordinary florins of that time; there was furthermore a deduction of nine *denari* from every livre; so that Machiavelli's stipend did not really amount to much more than one hundred gold florins.[3] Machiavelli was about thirty years of age when established as secretary in the company of Marcello Virgilio, who, although he may have been his very learned friend, was certainly not his preceptor.

Marcello Virgilio, born in 1464, was only five years older than Machiavelli. He had been the pupil of Landino and Poliziano; he knew Greek and Latin, medicine, and the natural sciences; he had a great facility for improvisation, even in Latin. These oratorical gifts were assisted by the nobility of his appearance; he was tall, had a dignified bearing, a spacious forehead, and an open countenance. Being nominated Professor of Letters at the Studio in 1497, he continued to give lessons until the year 1502. His literary remains consist of many Latin orations, of which the greater number are still unpublished; a translation of Dioscorides, which, although neither the first nor a very correct version, gained him the title of the Tuscan Dioscorides. In short he was a learned man of what might then have been

[1] The act of Machiavelli's nomination has frequently been published, but always with some omissions. Recently it has been republished by Passerini, in the volume before quoted, page lix; but here two documents have been turned into one, through the omission, at the beginning of the second paragraph, of the date, Die xviiii. *mensis junii*, by which it appears that the deliberation of the Great Council was taken four days after that of the Council of Eighty. (Florentine Archives, cl. ii. No 154, sheet 104.) The two decrees are written on the margin of the sheet indicated. This *filza*, or file, also bears the more modern indication of "Signori e Collegi, Deliberazioni," reg duplicate 169.

[2] This deliberation also has been frequently published. In none of the decrees of nomination is the salary mentioned. But in the reform of the chanceries carried out in 1498 before quoted, it is settled that the post which had been held by Alessandro Braccesi should have the yearly stipend of 192 florins, and that of Chancellor to the Second Chancery, namely that held by Antonio di Maria Nuti, should be of 200 florins per year. Machiavelli was really first secretary or Chancellor of the Second Chancery.

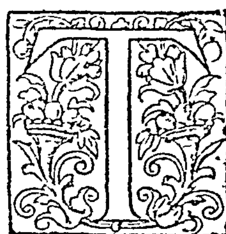
[3] These facts are extracted from the before-quoted Reform of the 28th December, 1494, and are further confirmed by the orders of payment, one of which can be seen in the Florence Archives, cl. viii. dist 2, No 69, a c 142.



CHAPTER II.

Niccolò Machiavelli begins to exercise the office of Secretary to the Ten—His mission to Forlì—Condemnation and Death of Paolo Vitelli—Discourse upon Pisan Affairs.

(1498-1499.)



HE principal undertaking in which the Republic was now engaged was the war with Pisa, and it seemed as though at last she would be granted fair play without interference from any quarter, in this trial of strength with her old adversary. In fact the Pope and the allies declared themselves satisfied with Florence in consequence of the execution of Savonarola, and demanded no other concessions; while the friendship which she had always kept up with France seemed sufficient to curb the other Italian potentates. It is true that Louis XII., on his accession to the French throne, had likewise assumed the titles of King of Jerusalem and Sicily, and Duke of Milan; thus in addition to the old pretensions upon Naples, also asserting those which he boasted over Lombardy, in right of descent from his grandmother, Valentina Visconti; it is true that this was prophetic of fresh troubles to Italy, and had indeed already spread general consternation in Milan and Naples; but on the other hand all this procured the Florentines the friendship and secret assistance of the Moor, and encouraged their hopes. Still the Venetians continued openly to favour the Pisans; the Lucchese, being weaker, limited themselves to giving secret help, and Pisa, with stern resolve and marvellous energy, was always upon the defensive. Not only did all the Pisan citizens carry arms, but even the inhabitants of the out-lying territory were rendered practised

not easily rid himself of the sarcastic expression continually playing round his mouth and flashing from his eyes, which gave him the air of a cold and impassable calculator; while nevertheless he was frequently ruled by his powerful imagination; sometimes suddenly led away by it to an extent befitting the most fantastic of visionaries. He applied himself to the faithful service of the Republic, with all the ardour of an ancient Republican, inspired by reminiscences of Rome, pagan, and republican. If not altogether satisfied with the present form of government, he was well content that the Medicean tyranny and the dominion of a monk were both at an end. Doubtless his intercourse with Marcello Virgilio was beneficial to his studies, and it is possible that he still attended some of the lectures given by his superior in office, but he could not have had many leisure hours, being occupied from morning to evening in writing official letters, of which to this day many thousands are preserved in the Florentine archives. Besides this employment he was continually sent by the Ten on state errands, throughout the territories of the Republic, and before long he was also entrusted with important missions beyond the frontiers He entered zealously into all these affairs, for they suited his tastes and the feverish activity of his nature. His leisure was devoted to reading, conversation, and the usual pleasures of life. Being of a cheerful temper, he was on good terms with his colleagues in the Chancery, and if intimate with his superior, Marcello Virgilio, was far more so with Biagio Buonaccorsi, who, although in an inferior position and but a mediocre scholar, was a worthy man and a firm friend. He it was, who when Machiavelli was at a distance used to write him long and affectionate letters in a tone of real friendship, and from these we learn that the first secretary of the Ten was much given to gay living, and to various irregular love affairs, of which the two wrote to each other in a style that is far from edifying.

engaged at his statue of Machiavelli, which is erected under the Uffizi We, however, found in Bartolini's studio the cast (of which we have a reproduction) of another bust, and this bears much more resemblance to the statue It is almost identical with a bust in stucco, probably of the times, which belonged to the Ricci family, the heirs of Machiavelli, and afterwards passed to Marchese Bentivaglio d'Aragona. An ancient portrait bust in terra cotta, apparently taken from the corpse, was once to be seen in Florence, but its owner, Baron Seymour Kirkupp, took it with him to Leghorn, and we do not know where it is now. Bartolini and other sculptors who had seen it had high opinion of it. In conclusion we must mention the engraving, frontispiece of the old edition of Machiavelli's works, dated 1550, which is known as the "Testina," on account of this very portrait. There is a certain resemblance in all these different portraits, with the exception, perhaps, of the mask found in Machiavelli's house.

the war with great activity, and made use of Machiavelli's services in numerous important affairs.

It is almost incredible what an immense amount of trouble, vexation, and danger this miniature war brought upon the Republic First of all, the jealousy between the old captain and the new, made it necessary to give Count Rinuccio the same pay as Vitelli, and to allow him to retain the title of governor, while the new captain was entrusted with the chief direction of the war. The campaign began prosperously enough with the capture of several places, then news came of the Venetians being already on the march towards the Casentino. It was necessary, therefore, to hire fresh troops and new leaders, and to slacken the war in the Pisan territory, in order to bring a larger force against the Venetians, who, in September, passed the Val di Lamone, and captured Mariadi. Here, however, they were checked by the Florentine troops, commanded by Count Rinuccio, and strengthened by a reinforcement from Duke Lodovico. Before these they retreated, but then marched towards the Casentino, taking the Abbey of Camaldoli on the way; after which they crossed Monte Alvernia, and took Bibbiena by surprise. These events compelled the Florentines to suspend altogether the war with Pisa, and, leaving a small force to defend the more important places in that territory, to despatch Vitelli with the whole army against the new enemy. In the meantime, Don Basilio, the Abbot of Camaldoli, was scouring the country, raising the peasantry of the mountain districts, with which he was so well acquainted, and by this means succeeded in arresting the march of the Venetians, and harassed them severely.[1] At this juncture the Duke of Urbino, who commanded in the enemies' camp, chancing to fall ill, asked a safe conduct from Vitelli for himself and his troops, which was immediately granted to him. This roused the anger and suspicions of the Florentines, especially when they learnt at the same time that their general had been speaking in public with Piero and Giuliano dei Medici, who were following the hostile army.

Winter had now set in, and although neither side was willing to retire, it was becoming difficult to carry on the war among the mountains, when Duke Ercole of Ferrara offered to arrange a peace between Florence, Pisa, and Venice. His arbitration being accepted, he pronounced his verdict at the beginning of 1499. By the 24th April the Venetians were to withdraw from the Casentino,

[1] Speaking of this Don Basilio, Abbot of San Felice in Piazza, and afterwards Vicar General of Camaldoli, Machiavelli says in his "Historical Fragments": "Cuius fuit summa manus in bello, et amor et fides in patriam" ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 366).

combatants by the continually occurring skirmishes. Venice had sent them 300 Stradiote or Albanian cavalry, lightly armed and very effective in raids and skirmishes; while a small number of French had remained in Pisa ever since the expedition of Charles VIII., and helped to defend the walls. It must also be noted that of late, in consequence of internal dissensions, the Florentines had greatly neglected military matters, and their Captain General Count Rinuccio da Marciano, together with their commissary Guglielmo dei Pazzi, had suffered so disastrous a defeat in an encounter of some importance, that they had barely escaped with life.[1] And this was the moment chosen by Venice to threaten an advance into the Casentino, in order to divert the besieging army in that direction. Fresh and more energetic measures were therefore pressingly required.

First of all urgent letters were sent to the French king, begging him to prevent his allies, the Venetians, from marching on the Casentino; a considerable loan of money was asked and obtained from the Moor; it was decided to recall from France, with the king's consent, Paolo and Vitellozzo Vitelli, and to Paolo, who had great military renown, the chief command of the army was offered.[2] His arrival in Florence, in the beginning of June, 1498, was the signal for a solemn festival. There was an assemblage of the people and of the magistrates of the Republic in front of the palace; Marcello Virgilio read a Latin oration,[3] in which, lauding the prowess and excellences of the new Captain, then present, he compared them to those of the greatest men of antiquity. And while this was going on, the astrologer, whom Vitelli had brought with him, remained with those of the Signoria in the palace courtyard, taking observations and "awaiting the arrival of the fortunate moment." No sooner was the signal agreed upon made, than trumpets sounded, the oration was interrupted, and the Gonfalonier hastened to present the baton of command, with wishes for success in the field. After which all went to hear mass in the cathedral, and on the 6th of June, 1498, the celebrated captain set out for the camp. Then the Ten began to push on

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 174.

[2] Nardi says that the engagement of Paolo and Vitellozzo, advised by the Moor, was made in agreement with the King of France, and at the joint expense of the said monarch and the Florentine people. "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 173.

[3] This Oration is in the Laurentian Library, Plut. lxxxx., cod. xxix.: "Oratio pro eligendo imperatore exercitus Paullo Vitellio, et dandis illi militaribus imperatoriis signis." In it the orator alludes to perils which he had recently incurred, perhaps in the Savonarola riots: "Scitis enim omnes quantis vitæ periculis his diebus iactatus sim, quantoque metu coactus sim fugere presentem ubique mortem, quam nescius ipse mecum forte trahebam."

large sums, not merely from carelessness, but in granting unlawful favours to personal friends, giving them useless commissions and commanderships;[1] and there was a threatening of almost open rebellion. Thus when in May the time came for the new elections, there was a popular cry of—Down with the Ten and the taxes (*nè Dieci nè danari non fanno pei nostri pari*), and the people unanimously refrained from voting.[2] The Signoria therefore had to condescend to assume the direction of the war, with the aid of certain of the more influential citizens. The accusations brought against the Ten had no reference either direct or indirect to Machiavelli, their secretary, who indeed had already gained considerable authority and renown. The second Chancery of which he was at the head, was now attached to the Signoria as well as the first; but this made little or no change in his position, and only brought him some additional occupation.

[1] According to the Reform of the 2nd December, 1494, the Ten were to hold office for six months (Florentine Archives, "Provvisioni, reg 186, sheet 4). By the decision of the Council of Eighty (11th May, 1495) the elections were to be made in the Great Council

By the Reform of the 27th of April, 1496 ("Provvisioni," reg. 188, sheet 16 and fol.), it was decided that "both general and special Commissioners throughout the dominions were to be elected by the Council of Eighty at the instance of the Ten who were to give ten names to be balloted for." The Ten, however, had the power of extending the term of office of those elected, to six months. Also, in emergencies, they had the right of sending a commissioner to the camp for fifteen days upon their own authority, and afterwards proceed to a regular election, which confirmed the powers of the delegate of the Ten This was the origin of many abuses, since, to oblige friends, they appointed commissioners *d'urgenza*, when no urgency existed, they kept them on from fortnight to fortnight, and finally sought to have them elected Besides nominations of "commissarii e rettori dei luoghi," the Ten engaged the military leaders, and had the control of the war expenses; all things which opened the door to many abuses

[2] See Guicciardini's "Storia Fiorentina," p 202 and fol., and Nardi's *op. cit*, vol. i pp. 189-91 This latter writer at p 184, in speaking of the straits to which the Republic was reduced, mentions a certain Lorenzo Catucci, who offered a free gift of a thousand florins and a loan of five thousand for five years, on condition "of having the *benefit* (*beneficio*) of the state for the lesser trades." His offer was refused, but on the day on which the *beneficio* could be legally granted, Catucci's name was put to the vote by the major trades, and he thus obtained gratis more than that which he had asked in return for his money. This shows us that some Republican virtues still remained in Florence at this date.

A measure of the 31st May 1499 (Florentine Archives, "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," reg 191, a c 10) established new rules for the election of magistrates, since it often being necessary at that time to call repeated meetings of the Great Council, in order to obtain the legal majority of votes, many wearied of it all and left off attending the meetings. It was therefore decided that all names obtaining the half of the beans and one extra, should be entitled to be put to the ballot. As regarded the Ten, however, all decisions were suspended until the Eighty should declare, by a majority of two-thirds of the votes, whether they desired that magistrature to be continued or not.

and from Pisan territory; the Florentines were to pay them the sum of 100,000 ducats within twelve years; the Pisans, while remaining masters of their fortress, and preserving their trade rights, were again to be subject to Florence. All parties were dissatisfied with these terms; yet the Florentines accepted them, and the Venetians withdrew their troops, but the Pisans, on the other hand, made preparations for war with greater fury than ever.[1] The secret of all this was, that new and startling events were expected elsewhere, Louis XII. having pledged himself to the Pope and Venetians that he would come to Italy to attack the Moor. Every one therefore withdrew his troops from Tuscany, and Florence and Pisa were at last left to face each other alone.

During these events Machiavelli had had a great deal to do, for all the work of the Chancery of the Ten was transacted by him. He wrote an immense number of letters, despatched orders, forwarded money and arms, and sometimes had to go to confer in person with the captains. Thus on the 24th of March, 1499, he was sent to Pontedera on a mission to Jacopo IV. of Appiano, lord of Piombino, who being in the service of the Republic, demanded a larger number of men, and pay equal to that received by Count Rinuccio. He succeeded in persuading him to be content with increased forces;[2] but the other captains were more pertinacious, and there was no end to their claims and complaints. Paolo Vitelli, disliking to be on an equality with Count Rinuccio, demanded and obtained increased pay, and this instantly aroused the jealousy of the Count, who in his turn began to make complaints. All these things had augmented the expenses of the war, and consequently the taxes, to such an extent, that the latter had become unbearable. The books of the decrees issued by the Republic during these years exhibit nothing but a series of new and ingenious contrivances for extorting money from the citizens. The popular discontent was increased on seeing that the Ten, for that reason nicknamed the "ten expenders," had squandered

[1] See the "Storie di Firenze" of Nardi and Guicciardini. Regarding the sum which the Florentines were to pay to the Venetians, Nardi tells us that it was 100,000 ducats in twelve years, Guicciardini, 150,000 in fifteen years There is a break in Buonaccorsi's Diary at this point, and the original manuscript in the Riccardiana Library contains a note stating that the author had to interrupt his work, owing to a six months' absence from Florence. We may observe that that is in itself sufficient to disprove the opinion of some who wished to attribute the Diary to Machiavelli, who certainly was not absent for six months at that period. But of this more will be said later.

[2] The letter of the Ten giving the commission to Machiavelli in date of the 24th March, 1498 (Florentine style), is to be found among the "Legazioni," and in the published "Opere," is generally preceded, erroneously, by another of November, 1498, delegating not Niccolò Machiavelli, but Niccolò Mannelli.

Feo in charge of it, brought Codironchi back with her to Imola, where she gave birth to a child on the following day. On the 14th of April, 1848, a conspiracy broke out in Forlì, Girolamo Riario was stabbed, and she, left a widow at the age of twenty-six, and with six children, found herself a prisoner in the hands of the Orsi, ringleaders of the revolt. But not even then did her courage fail her. The castle still held out for her, and she was allowed to enter it, in the hope that she would order its surrender to the people, in whose hands she had left her children as hostages. But she had already sent messengers to ask for aid from Milan, and now that she was in safety, she prepared to defend the castle until succour should arrive. To those who sought to subdue her, by threatening the murder of her children, she replied that she was able to give birth to more. The city was recaptured, and the rebellion put down with bloodshed. Afterwards the faithful Castellan who had saved her life, was suddenly disarmed and dismissed, and his post given to his brother, Giacomo Feo, a handsome youth whom the Countess soon married.

This second husband also died by assassination in 1495, while driving home with the Countess from the chase. She instantly mounted a horse and galloped into Forlì, where she took a sanguinary revenge. Forty persons were put to death, and fifty imprisoned or otherwise persecuted. Yet it was asserted by many that she herself had hired the assassins of her husband, and was now making his death a pretext for ridding herself of her enemies. She answered the accusation by saying, that thanks to the Lord, neither she, nor any other member of the Sforza house had ever found it necessary to make use of common assassins, when they wished to get rid of any man. In 1497 she married for the third time, and became the wife of Giovanni, son of Pier Francesco, one of the younger branch of the Medici, who had come to her Court as ambassador of the Florentine Republic.[1] On this occasion she was made citizen of Florence, partly because it was wished to flatter and keep on good terms with her; partly because the old laws prohibiting the marriage of citizens, particularly of powerful citizens, with foreigners, had been revived since the intermarriage of the Medici with the Orsini of Rome had so

[1] This Giovanni dei Medici (1467–98) was, as we have said, son of Pier Francesco, who was the son of Lorenzo, second brother of Cosimo, *pater patriæ*. As all know, the father of Cosimo and Lorenzo was Giovanni dei Medici, the real founder of the family. The elder branch, namely that directly descended from Cosimo, was extinguished in 1537 by the death of Alessandro, *murdered by* Lorenzino dei Medici. The Grand Dukes of Tuscany were descended from the second branch.

On the 12th of July, 1499, he received his first important commission, being sent with a despatch from the Signory, signed by Marcello Virgilio, to Caterina Sforza, Countess of Imola and Forlì. The friendship of this small State was carefully cultivated by the Republic, for not only was it situated on the high road from Upper to Lower Italy, but also on that leading into Tuscany by the Val di Lamone. From this side the Venetians had advanced, from this side the Duke of Valentinois had made threatening demonstrations. That part of the country too was warlike, and furnished mercenaries to all who asked them of the Countess, who made almost a trade of it. Her first-born son, Ottaviano Riario, though a mere youth, was always ready to earn money by taking a command (*condotta*). In 1498, he had obtained one worth fifteen thousand ducats, from the Florentines, who were anxious to keep upon friendly terms with his mother. His engagement was to expire at the end of June, but might be renewed at the pleasure of the Signori for another year. But at the end of the first period Riario was very discontented. He said that the Florentines had not observed their part of the bargain, and that he objected to renew it. The Countess, however, being a much more prudent person, seeing that the Florentines desired her friendship, and knowing that Valentinois still had designs upon Romagna, showed herself disposed to ratify the *beneplacito*, adding that her uncle the Moor had sent her a request for men-at-arms, and that she would therefore be glad of a speedy reply in order to know what she should do. For this reason Machiavelli was sent as Envoy to her Court.

The Countess Caterina was an extraordinary woman, and quite capable of holding her own against the secretary. Born in 1462, an illegitimate daughter of Galeazzo Maria Sforza,[1] by Lucrezia, wife of a certain Sandriani of Milan, she was a woman of handsome, regular features, of great bodily strength, and of more than masculine intellect. She had gone through many and singular adventures. At a very early age she was married to the dissolute son of Sixtus IV., Girolamo Riario, who, owing to the violent tyranny of his rule, was in continual danger of assassination by conspirators. In 1487 when far advanced in pregnancy, she was nursing her husband in an illness at Imola, when news arrived that the Castle of Forlì had been seized by Codronchi, master of the palace, who had murdered the governor. Whereupon Caterina started the same night, entered the castle, and leaving Tommaso

[1] It is an odd fact that Nardi, the contemporary and usually faithful historian (*op. cit.*, vol. 1 p. 34), speaks of her as the sister of Lodovico, when she herself in her letters to the Florentines calls him *il nostro barba*, our Uncle.

On the 22nd of July he thought that he had concluded the bargain, having raised his offer to twelve thousand ducats; yet he added that he was not certain, because the Countess "had always stood upon her dignity," so that he could never clearly determine whether she inclined towards Florence or Milan. "I see on the one hand," he wrote, "that the Court is crowded with Florentines, who appear to manage all the concerns of the State; also, and what is still more important, the Countess beholds the Duke of Milan attacked, without knowing whether she may rely upon his aid or not; but on the other hand the Moor's agent seems to have authority, and foot soldiers are continually leaving for Milan."

In fact, although by the 23rd of July everything appeared to be concluded, and it was settled that the agreement should be signed the following day, when Machiavelli presented himself to ask for her signature, the Countess received him as usual in the presence of the Milanese agent, and told him that, "having thought the matter over in the night, it seemed to her better not to fulfil the terms, unless the Florentines would pledge themselves to defend her State. That although she had sent him a message of a different nature the previous day, he ought not to be surprised at the change, since the more things are talked over, the better they are understood."[1] But the Florentine Government had expressly told Machiavelli that it was decided not to undertake any such obligation, therefore there was nothing for him to do but return to Florence, which he accordingly did.[2]

The failure of this mission seems to show that the Countess was more cunning than Machiavelli, who allowed himself to be outwitted by a woman. Nor can that be very astonishing, when we remember that Caterina Sforza was a woman of masculine intellect, long sole ruler of her State and of great business experience, whereas the Florentine secretary, notwithstanding his wonderful abilities, was only a man of letters making his first campaign in diplomacy. But at bottom the Florentines had no motive for discontent. Their real object was not the arrangement of the *condotta*, but rather that of winning the Countess's friendship without any expense; and in this their success was complete,

[1] See the "Legazione" to Caterina Sforza, coming first in every edition. There are seven letters from Machiavelli. "Opere," vol. vi. pp. 11-31.

[2] For this mission Machiavelli received, in consequence of the decree of 31st of August, 1499, nineteen broad florins in gold, "to cover his expenses going, stopping and returning in nineteen days, counting from the 13th of July up to the 1st of the present month inclusive." This document is in the Florence Archives, "Signori, Stanziamenti del" 1499, sheet 11. It was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iii. p. 32, note 2.

greatly swelled the pride of that family. In the April of 1498 Caterina gave birth to another son, afterwards renowned as Giovanni delle Bande Nere, father to Cosimo, first Grand Duke of Tuscany; and towards the end of the same year her third husband also breathed his last. She was therefore at thirty-six years of age, a widow for the third time, the mother of many children, absolute mistress of her little State, and noted as a woman of excellent prudence and courage, when Niccolò Machiavelli presented himself at her Court.[1]

The Florentines were disposed to confirm their *beneplacito* to Count Ottaviano, but not to grant him a command exceeding the value of ten thousand ducats, their only object being that of gaining the Countess's good-will. They also commissioned Machiavelli to purchase of her as much powder, saltpetre, and ammunition as she could spare, since perpetual supplies were needed for the camp before Pisa.[2] After a necessary halt at Castrocaro, whence he sent information to the Signory of the factions which divided that place, he reached Forlì on the 16th day of July, and presented himself straightway to the Countess. He found with her the agent of Lodovico, and in his presence set forth the object of his mission, the intentions of his Republic, and its desire to be on friendly terms with her. The Countess listened to him with great attention, said that the words of the Florentines "had always satisfied her, whereas their deeds had always much displeased her,"[3] and that she must have time for reflection.

She afterwards let him know that she had been offered better terms by Milan, and then negotiations began. She had neither powder nor ammunition for sale, not having sufficient for her own needs. On the other hand she had an abundance of soldiers whom she passed daily in review and sent on to Milan. Machiavelli, at the instance of Marcello Virgilio, tried to obtain some of these to send to Pisa, but could not come to terms with the Countess either for the price to be paid, or as to when he could have them.[4]

[1] See the "Vita di Caterina Sforza," by Abate Antonio Burriel, 3 vols in 4to; Bologna, 1795. See also, "A Decade of Italian Women," by T. A. Trollope; London, 1859, 2 vols

[2] See the "Istruzione" given to Machiavelli, decreed on the 12th of July, 1499, in vol. vi. p. 7, of the "Opere."

[3] Letter of the 17th of July, in the "Legazione a Caterina Sforza."

[4] The Florentines required them at once, "for the Captain begs, worries and presses for them daily and hourly." Letter of the 18th of July, signed by Marcello Virgilio. These and other letters from the same, which are however of little or no importance, are in the National Library of Florence ("Carte del Machiavelli," case 11), and were published by Passerini, together with the "Legazione" to Caterina Sforza of Forlì, in vol. iii. of the "Opere" (P. M.).

Before setting out on his mission to Forlì, Machiavelli was engaged, as we have already noted, in penning letters to calm the jealousies of the captains using every argument to inspire them with a love for the Republic which none of them felt, and induce them to prosecute the war on good terms with one other. Vitelli had made a proposal to attack Cascina, and this being agreed to, he took it by assault on the 26th of June, thereby raising the spirits and hopes of the Florentines, who immediately conceived a high opinion of his valour. But from that moment everything came to a standstill, while all expenses increased enormously, so that Machiavelli, on his return from Forlì, found the Signory in consternation, the people irritated, and the captains demanding remittances which were not to be had. Early in August he had letters despatched to them in the name of the Signory, stating that there were the greatest difficulties in the way of getting the Councils to vote funds for fresh expenditure; and that if matters went on long in this fashion "it would be impossible for half Italy to furnish supplies for all this artillery." [1]

Ammirato, in his "Famiglie nobili Italiane," at page 103, alludes to a *very small note book*, written by Machiavelli, "perhaps to put him in the way of the history which he never continued." And in the "Elogi di Uomini illustri Toscani" (Florence, 1766–73, vol. iv. p. 37) we find that a man of letters had discovered that the "Diary" was not by Buonaccorsi, but by Machiavelli, founding this theory on Ammirato's observation, and on the circumstance that the "Diary" begins almost at the point where the "Historical Fragments," the continuation of Machiavelli's "Histories," come to an end. Moreni, in his "Bibliografia della Toscana," repeated this assertion without disputing it. Yet it would have been easy to observe that Ammirato quotes a fragment of the *quadernuccio* alluded to, and this fragment is the description of Niccolò Valori, written by Machiavelli and published among his "Nature d' Uomini illustri fiorentini," which might have been comprised in a *quadernuccio* or quire, whereas the "Diary" is a volume of respectable bulk. Thus the strange assertion might easily have been refuted. All the old MSS. of the "Diary" bear Buonaccorsi's name, the autograph one preserved in the Riccardiana Library of Florence (codex 1920) also has a note, as we before mentioned, recording the author's absence from Florence during six months, when Machiavelli was almost always in the Chancery. Some have tried to maintain that the handwriting of the autograph "Diary" might be confounded with that of Machiavelli; but comparisons of the two is sufficient to disprove the assertion. Hence it were useless to dwell too long upon these unfounded doubts.

It is necessary to mention that almost the whole of this "Diary" has been incorporated in the "Storia di Firenze" by Jacopo Nardi, who has, however, made many corrections in the style.

[1] Florentine Archives, "Lettere dei Dieci di Balìa," 1499, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 91. According to the new arrangement of the archives, the same *filza* or file is labelled *Signori, missive*, No 21. Both labels are preserved, in order to facilitate research. The letter quoted above is of the 5th of August, and is to be found at sheet 64

We now begin to avail ourselves of Machiavelli's official letters, of which a large number still remain inedited in the Florence Archives. Of original letters only there are more than 4100. Among them, however, are included the 264 published

for the negotiations were not broken off, a confidential agent from Forlì being sent to continue them.[1] To Machiavelli himself the mission had been most useful, for his letters had been highly praised by all in the Palace. His ever-faithful friend and colleague, Biagio Buonaccorsi, a Republican admirer of Savonarola, of Benivieni, of Pico della Mirandola, wrote to him continually and kept him *au fait* of everything. He was a lover of learning, although but a mediocre writer, author of some poems and of a Diary which gives a very accurate account of Florentine events from 1498 to 1512. "In my opinion," he said in a letter of 19th of July, "you have acquitted yourself so far with much honour of the mission imposed upon you, in the which thing I have taken and am still taking great delight; go on as you have begun, for hitherto you have done us much honour." He repeats the same in other letters, in one of which he asks for a portrait of the Countess, and begs that it may be forwarded "in a roll, to avoid its being spoiled by folding." And he also earnestly begs Machiavelli to return at once, because in his absence there was great disorder in the Chancery, and envy and jealousy were very rife; wherefore "remaining away is not "good for you, and here there is a deluge of work such as never "was."[2]

[1] "The respectable Messrs Joanni, my auditor." See the Countess's letter, dated 3rd of August 1499, in the "Opere," vol vi. p. 31.

[2] Three of the letters written by Buonaccorsi in July are to be found in the National Library of Florence, namely two dated the 19th, one the 27th, "Carte di Machiavelli," case II, Nos 1, 77, 78 Biagio Buonaccorsi was faithful to Machiavelli, even when the latter fell into misfortune, and was exposed to many attacks for the publication of the "Principe"; he was born in 1472, and married a niece of Marsilio Ficino, who was afterwards the friend of Machiavelli's wife. He was the author of several poems which still remain unpublished in the Florence libraries, and have not much literary merit. He also wrote the "Impresa fatta dai Signori Florentini l'anno 1500, con le genti Francesi, per espugnare la citta di Pisa capitano Monsignor di Belmonte" This little work which is of slight literary value, but useful on account of its historical accuracy, was published by F. L. Polidori in the "Archivio Storico," vol. v part II. It consists of nineteen pages, to which Polidori added a preface of his own, giving many details regarding the author. During his life Buonaccorsi published nothing but a species of epistle dedicated to Girolamo Benivieni regarding Pico della Mirandola's commentary on Benivieni's own composition, "Canzone dell amor divino." See "Opere di Girolamo Benivieni": Florence, Giunti, 1519 But Buonaccorsi's principal work is his "Diary" of events happening in Italy and especially in Florence from 1498 to 1512, during which period Machiavelli and he were together in the second Chancery of the Republic, and quitted office at the same time, when the Government was changed. The "Diary" was published in Florence by Giunti in 1519; and though without much literary merit, has great historical importance, being based upon official letters The style in which it is written forbids all comparison with the works of Machiavelli; yet strange to say, it was frequently attributed to his pen.

that he was sure of getting it to surrender on conditions. All this was more than enough to make the Florentines lose patience. The Signory openly declared that they would no longer be "led in the dark;"[1] and on the 20th of August Machiavelli was ordered to write as follows to the Commissaries at the camp:— "We have granted the captain all that which he desired, yet we behold" "all our trouble put to nought through his various shufflings and deceit"[2] For the which reason, had our laws permitted of it, two of our number would have come in person to try and discover the cause of this double dealing, "since it appears that you either will not write to us of the matter or are ignorant of it"[3]. But all was in vain. Fever was making great havoc in the army, which daily diminished, whereas the Pisans were receiving reinforcements The two Commissaries were seized with fever, and one of them died. In writing to the new ones who quickly replaced them, Machiavelli said, in the name of the Signory: "We should have preferred defeat to inaction at so decisive a moment." "We neither know what to say, nor with what reasons to excuse ourselves before all this people, who will deem that we have fed them with lies, in holding out to them day by day vain promises of certain victory."[4]

Some decision had to be taken, and no money being available, the only thing now to be done, after Vitelli's strange conduct and the serious suspicions to which it had given rise, was to send him immediate orders to break up the camp, leaving only a few of the more important places in a state of defence. But even then all went badly, since, among other things, ten boats loaded with ammunition and artillery were sunk in the Arno, and some of these fell into the hands of the Pisans, who fished them up.[5] But

[1] Letter of the 14th August, at sheet 74 of the Register before mentioned.

[2] At this point, we find on the margin of the Register, the following note, in the writing of the period: "Quantus moeror"

[3] We give in the Appendix this letter of the 20th August together with another of the 15th, Documents ii and iii

[4] This letter also of the 25th August is given in the Appendix, Document iv.

[5] See in the "Scritti inediti di Niccolò Machiavelli," illustrated by G. Canestrini (Florence, Barbéra, Bianchi & Co, 1857), the letters dated the 8th, 10th, and 13th September, and that of the 27th October, 1499, at pp 81, 82, 85, and 118

In this volume Canestrini has reprinted the letters written by Machiavelli, when he had the ordering of the militia in Florence, and which he had already published in the "Archivio Storico" He has also added many other inedited letters. They are 264 in all, and all treat of the affairs of the Republic Excepting those concerning the militia, they may be said to be chosen haphazard, without a purpose, without any proper chronological arrangement or distribution of subjects He jumps from one letter to another, leaves out portions longer than those which he gives, without assigning any reason, and even without warning the reader. Evi-

And a little later he added "that having expended up to this date about 64,000 ducats for this expedition, everybody has been drained; and to make up the present sum which we now send (2,000 ducats), every strong box has been emptied. . . ." If you do not act quickly, "we shall surely be stranded, for were other 6,000 ducats required, we should have to renounce all hope of victory."[1]

After this, however, came a moment of joyful encouragement: news arrived that the tower of Stampace had been captured and a wide breach effected in the walls of Pisa, so that hour by hour the Florentines expected to hear that their troops had entered the city. They learnt instead that on the 10th there had been a pitched battle; that the Church of San Paolo had been reached, but that just when the whole army, and especially the youthful Florentines who had joined the camp as volunteers, were carrying all before them by their indomitable ardour, they were suddenly ordered to retreat. And Paolo Vitelli, seeing the unwillingness of the soldiers to obey, rushed among them with his brother Vitellozzo and drove them back with blows[2]

This news raised to the highest pitch the indignation of the Florentines, and awakened grave suspicions of treachery on the part of Vitelli. All remembered the safe conduct granted by him in Casentino to the Duke of Urbino, at the time when he had also allowed himself to be seen in conversation with Piero and Giuliano dei Medici. Shortly before the capture of Cascina he had taken a certain Ranieri della Sassetta prisoner, who, after having been in the pay of the Florentines, had gone over to the Pisans, and taken part in numberless intrigues against the Republic. The Signory had ordered that he should be instantly sent to Florence for trial, but Vitelli allowed him to escape, saying that "he would not become the jailor of a valiant and worthy soldier."[3] And now he checked his army exactly when victory was assured and Pisa itself on the point of being taken, saying

by Canestrini in his volume, "Scritti Inediti" of Niccolò Machiavelli, and also some of the legations. To these we shall refer later on.

These letters were written by Machiavelli himself in the minutes or protocols, and then copied into the registers by the clerks of the Chancery. Naturally all the minutes are not in his hand, but his autograph is easily distinguished. We have not been able to find the minutes of the letters he wrote in August, but only the register or the copies; therefore the few letters we quote as having been written by him in that month, are judged to be his on the strength of their style. Of all the letters which we quote, dating from the 1st September, 1499, we have seen the autograph originals, excepting when the contrary is stated

[1] Letter on the 7th August, at sheet 68 of the before-quoted Register.

[2] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 196 and fol.

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p. 204.

September, and, although he had confessed to nothing, was beheaded within four-and-twenty hours. This event made much noise both in the city and abroad, Vitelli being a renowned leader, and one who also enjoyed the friendship of France. Guicciardini considers that he was innocent of treachery, attributing his inexplicable conduct to the nature and habits of mercenary captains; Nardi, on the contrary, declares that he was guilty and well deserved his fate; Buonaccorsi, who was in the Chancery, relates the matter without comment, concluding with these words: "and this was the end of Pagolo Vitegli, a very excellent man." As to Machiavelli, although he had no opportunity of mentioning the affair in his "Storie" or in the "Frammenti," which do not go beyond the middle of '99, yet his opinion is manifested in the "Decennali,"[1] by the letters which he wrote, and the ardour he displayed in the conduct of the affair.

We do not know that any decisive proof of Vitelli's treason was discovered at the time, but from the deliberations of the Venetian Council of Ten, it is clearly shown that Vitelli was really a traitor; that he had promised to reinstate Piero dei Medici in Florence; and that negotiations to that effect had gone so far that the Venetians had promised to reward him with a Condotta of the value of forty thousand ducats, or of an even larger sum, should he insist upon it.[2] At any rate, it was known to the Florentines that Vitelli did not intend to conquer Pisa before seeing the result of the war between the French and Lodovico the Moor, with whom the Republic had never come to an open rupture.[3]

The victory of the French being assured, it seems that he had

Machiavelli," case 11, No. 75 Nardi in fact tells us (*op. cit*, vol i. p. 204) that this Cerbone was seized and questioned, and that letters and papers concerning Vitelli were found on his person.

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p 364

[2] Archivio dei Frari, "Misti," c. x. vol n 275, carte 213t. Herr M. Brosch was the first to call attention to these documents in the pages of Sybil's "Historische Zeitschrift."

[3] From the information sent by Machiavelli between April and July, 1499, to Francesco Tosinghi, commissary at the camp before Pisa, it is very clear that the Florentines pressed on the one side by the French, on the other by the Moor, would not declare themselves openly, "and temporizing with one party and the other, were making a benefit of delay." See the "Opere," vol viii letter v, in date of the 6th July, 1499, and the two preceding In the letter of the 27th September, edited by Canestrini, and quoted by us above, the Florentines, while urging the immediate seizure of Vitelli, said that they desired to act with severity, to make it understood, "especially by His Most Christian Majesty, that they knew how to take care of themselves, and meant to be respected" This serves to confirm the suspicion that Vitelli, as a friend of France, was dragging out the campaign in order to wait for the result of the war in Lombardy.

Vitelli could not extricate himself from the consequences of this affair. Besides what had already occurred, and when every one in Florence believed him to be a traitor, a rumour was also spread that, in the flight of Lodovico from Milan, papers had fallen into the hands of the French, proving beyond doubt that he (Vitelli) had made secret arrangements for prolonging the war.[1] Braccio Martelli and Antonio Canigiani had already been despatched as war commissioners, apparently for the purpose of furnishing the necessary funds for breaking up the camp, but in reality to seize the persons of Paolo and Vitellozzo Vitelli, the latter of whom had made an attempt to escape, by asking for a leave of absence, that was refused him.

Letters written by Machiavelli at this period show that the secret of the business was in his hands, and that, convinced of Vitelli's bad faith and treachery, he laboured with exceeding zeal and ardour to achieve the desired object. On the 27th of September the *dénouement* of the drama was close at hand, and he urged the commissioners to proceed with energy against "rebels and enemies of the Republic," since it was a question of saving the Florentine honour, and also of showing France that Florence had the courage to provide for her own safety, and claimed equal respect with all other Italian potentates. In conclusion, he recommended that to vigorous action should be joined so much circumspection and prudence, "that you may not be misled, by over-zeal or over-caution, to accelerate matters more than is necessary on the one hand, or more than opportunity permits on the other." [2]

The two commissaries fulfilled their orders with prudence. Vitelli was quartered about a mile beyond Cascina, to which place the field artillery was being withdrawn. They invited him to come thither on the 28th under colour of wishing to consult with him on the conduct of the war; but, after dining together, they led him into a secret chamber, and kept him confined there. At the same time they had sent in search of Vitellozzo, who was ill in bed; he, however, suspecting a trap, asked for time to dress himself, and contrived to make his escape towards Pisa.[3] Paolo, being conveyed to Florence, was examined on the last day of

dently, too, he was ignorant of the greater part of Machiavelli's official letters, since he publishes many of no value and leaves out a large number of those of importance.

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. pp. 199, 200

[2] "Scritti Inediti," as before at p. 95. See also the letter of the 29th September at p. 96, and those following on the same subject.

[3] Nardi, "Storie di Firenze," vol. i pp. 201 and 202. That same day, the 28th September, Paolo Vitelli wrote from Cascina, after being made a prisoner, a letter to a certain Cerbone da Castello, which is to be found among the "Carte del

various opinions expressed by the captains about the method of dividing the Florentine troops into two or three camps, and the war operations that were proposed. He narrated and expounded these opinions and proposals with an exactness and precision clearly proving that, even at that period, his intellect and his studies were not only dedicated to State affairs, but likewise to military matters. Or, to put it more plainly still, it is evident that he already recognized that a knowledge of the art of war was an essential element of statesmanship.



changed his mind and decided,[1] so at least Nardi tells us—to do his part in earnest; but he had then lost his reputation, and it was too late.[2]

Another proof, were any necessary, of the prominent part taken by Machiavelli in all affairs relating to the war, and of the esteem in which his labours were held, is to be found in his short "Discorso fatto al Magistrato de' Dieci sopra le cose di Pisa," which, though undated, bears internal evidence of having been written in this year.[3] It was one of the many compositions which his office made it necessary for him to write, and in it, after proving by a series of just arguments the folly of hoping to reduce Pisa otherwise than by force, he gives details of the

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 210.

[2] Many were the reports spread about this Vitelli affair. Signor Nitti (*op. cit.* vol. i. pp 67 and fol.) publishes a letter found among the "Carte del Machiavelli" (case 1, No. 49) without address, date or signature, which likewise mentions these reports, and this he gives as a letter by Machiavelli, on account of the handwriting; but the hand is certainly not that of Machiavelli, nor does the style appear to be his For greater certainty, we have also submitted the manuscript to the examination of competent friends.

In the June of 1501, a certain Piero Gambacorti, who had been in the service of the Pisans, was seized and questioned. An account of his trial, written in Machiavelli's own hand, exists in the Florentine Archives. Being interrogated as to the affair of Stampace, he said that the Pisans thought that all was lost: "all abandoned the idea of resistance, and throughout Saturday and half Sunday Pisa was yours" He had gone away thinking the town was lost; many soldiers and constables prepared to depart; "but seeing that your troops did not follow up their victory, they returned to the bastions and the wall." Being asked if he considered that Paolo Vitelli was a traitor, he replied that, without being positive of his treachery, he could affirm that for a day and a half Pisa was in his hands. That he had said as much to Vitellozzo at Faenza, who had answered that, at that time they were ignorant to what condition the Pisans were reduced; that they thought to have done enough in taking Stampace, and that they meant to fortify in order to take the city afterwards; also that it was Paolo's nature "to spare his men, and avoid exposing them to peril." This almost insignificant trial was published by Passerini in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol iii p. 78 We certainly should not give it a place in the "Opere" of Machiavelli, since little or nothing of his could be in it, besides, it is well to remember, that owing to the duties of his office, and to collect necessary materials for his "Storie," he copied and preserved many writings which were not his own.

[3] "Opere," vol ii. p. 380. As to the year in which this "Discorso" was written, some doubts may arise from its being addressed to the Dieci, who in 1499 were not elected Yet, on reading it, it is very difficult to assign it to another year, since it alludes to the *recent example* of the Venetians who had abandoned the Pisans, who indeed found themselves "not accepted by Milan, and repulsed by Genoa." Now, the Venetian event happened at the end of 1498, and towards the end of 1499 the French had already entered Milan. Still the title may have been written at a latter date, and may not have been written by Machiavelli. Besides which, although the Ten were not elected in 1499, their office was not suppressed, their Chancery remained, carried on the affairs of the war, and the series of their protocols and registers went on as before.

appeared to him that the Moor, in trying to sweep the cocks
of Italy, was being smothered by the dust;[1] and such was in re
the case.

Louis XII., who had always claimed a right to the Duch
Milan, no sooner ascended the throne of France, than he bega
provide for the internal security of the State. He reduced
taxes; arranged the administration of justice, and nominate
chief minister, Georges d' Amboise, archbishop of Rouen.
respected the constituted authorities, and took no delibera
without their advice; he maintained the independence of
courts of justice; he encouraged Gallican liberties; he
economical. When, by means of these wise provisions, he
assured the order of the State, and gained much favour with
people, he turned his attention to the Italian war, which wa
longer unpopular in France, by reason of the increased confid
in the sovereign, and the general desire to revenge past hum
tions On the 9th of February, 1499, Louis concluded with
Venetians a treaty offensive and defensive for the conquest of
Duchy of Milan, pledging himself to yield a portion of it to t
Thus the Moor found himself between two fires, with no o
look to for help; since the Florentines had always been
friends of France, and the Pope, after the promises of aid to
Valentinois, also gave his approval. The French army, u
the command of the Milanese G. G. Trivulzio—who, since
battle of Fornuovo, had become very famous—of other cap
of renown, and strengthened by a large body of Swiss, adva
with singular rapidity. Some of Lodovico's captains
treacherous, others incapable, and the people rose against
so that he had to arrange for his flight before he had recov
from his first reverses. He first sent away his two sons in
care of his brother, Cardinal Ascanio, to whom he entruste
sum of 240,000 ducats. On the 2nd of September he foll
them himself into Germany.

On the 11th of that month the French army marched
Milan, where, shortly afterwards, Louis XII. made his so
entry. When the ambassadors of the different Italian S
presented themselves before him, those of Florence were the
favourably received, for, notwithstanding some occasional va
tion, that Republic had ever remained faithful to France alik
prosperity and ill fortune.

The Florentines, nevertheless, had many reasons for dis
tent with the French captains who had remained behin
Tuscany, to whom they attributed the resistance of

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i pp. 209, 210.



CHAPTER III.

Louis XII. in Italy—Defeat and imprisonment of the Moor—Niccolò Machiavelli at the camp before Pisa—First embassy to France.

(1499–1500.)



ONE of the Florentines' special reasons for the hurried trial of Vitelli, was their fear lest the new and important successes of the French in Lombardy should prevent the execution of the sentence. These events, in fact, caused no slight changes in the affairs of Tuscany, and therefore it is necessary to speak of them.

After the battle of Fornuovo, Lodovico seemed actually to have realized his old desire of holding complete sway over Italian affairs. In the streets of Florence, people sang:

> "Cristo in cielo e il Moro in terra
> Solo sa il fine di questa guerra."[1]

He himself had caused a silver medal to be coined, with a vessel of water on the obverse, and fire on the reverse, symbolic of his power as master of peace and war. Also, upon one of the inner walls of his palace, he had had the map of Italy painted with a number of cocks, hens, and chickens and a Moor, broom in hand, sweeping them all away. When, however, he asked the Florentine Ambassador, Francesco Gualterotti, for his opinion of the picture, the latter replied that it was a pretty fancy, but that it

[1] Which may be rendered in English doggerel:

> "The Lord above and the Moor below
> Alone can tell how the war will go."

guised as a monk. But, whether by his own fear, or some
treachery of the soldiers, he was recognized and taken priso
the 10th of April, 1500. The same fate befell several of his ca
and his brother Ascanio, who, having fled from Milan, w
trayed by a friend to the Venetians, who in their turn gav
up to the French. Thus, as Gualterotti had prophesied, the
was indeed "smothered by his own sweepings," and his for
career was for ever at an end. When brought into Lyo
prisoner, so great a multitude thronged to gaze upon hi
force was required for his protection. Confined in the
of Loches in Touraine, he died there after ten years of
imprisonment. Cardinal Ascanio was placed in the to
Bourges; but regained his liberty after a time.

The king, whose past experience had taught him cautio
Georges d'Amboise—now a Cardinal—as governor to Mil
Cardinal de Rouen was summoned into Italy. He, thin
was "better to fine than to sack," condemned Milan to con
300,000 ducats towards the expenses of the war, and levi
portionate fines on the other cities, in this way exciting
discontent than Trivulzio. After this he made his entry in
Lombard capital. The king soon followed, and was s
joined by the Florentine Ambassador, Tommaso Soderin
came to offer his congratulations, and to arrange abo
number of soldiers to be sent to Pisa according to the
already agreed upon. The number considered sufficient w
spearmen, 4,000 Swiss, and 2,000 Gascons, the former
expense of the French, the others with the artillery and w
to be paid for by the Florentines, at the rate of 24,000 du
month.[1] These terms were extremely onerous to the R
which had already assumed so many other obligations t
France; yet it submitted to everything in the hope that, w
aid of a strong army, it might be able to bring the enterpr
successful termination, at the cost of only two or three n
pay.

But now the Florentines were to gain cruel experienc
their dealings with the French. The Cardinal de Roue
was at the head of all things, tried to keep up the French a
others' expense, and accordingly demanded that payment
commence in May, that is long before the troops were in T
and also that their return journey should be paid. And to
was necessary to consent. It was only on the 22nd of Ju

[1] Buonaccorsi ("Diario," p 30) is very confused in fixing this sum
believe that we have interpreted him accurately; Nardi ("Storia di
vol. i. p. 223) copies Buonaccorsi's account word for word.

Pisans, and, in part, the unfortunate result of the siege that had just compelled them to raise the camp and put to death Paolo Vitelli. But, instead of venting their anger in useless complaints, they concluded a fresh treaty with the king in Milan (19th October, 1499). By this he was bound to assist them by every means in the conquest of Pisa; they, on their side, were to be prepared to send 400 men-at-arms and 3,000 foot-soldiers to Milan, and were to aid the Neapolitan expedition with 500 men-at-arms and 50,000 crowns. The surrender of Pisa was to take place before the French went to Naples, and the Florentines meanwhile were to restore to the king the sums of money lent them by the Moor, according to an estimate to be made by G. G. Trivulzio, after examination of the papers found at Milan.[1] And likewise they were to take into their pay the Prefect Giovanni della Rovere, brother of the Cardinal of San Piero in Vincoli, whom the French wished to oblige.[2]

All these proceedings were suspended by new events. The French, and more especially their general Trivulzio, who had been made governor of Milan, had so greatly excited the discontent of the people, that when the Moor presented himself at the head of 8,000 recently-hired Swiss, and 500 men-at-arms, he was joyfully received by the very men, who, a short time before, had expelled him, and on the 5th of February he re-entered Milan. Trivulzio had already quitted the city, but leaving a strong body of men to guard the fortress; he stationed 400 more at Novara, and then advanced towards Mortara, where he stayed to wait for reinforcements, while many even of his Swiss deserted to the Moor, who gave higher pay. However, in April, 10,000 Swiss mercenaries, under the command of La Trémouille, marched into Italy to assist the French expedition. The hostile armies were already facing each other in order of battle, when Lodovico's Swiss troops declared that, having been hired as individuals they could not fight against the Helvetian flag borne by their compatriots whom Louis XII. had taken into his employ by special agreement with the Confederation itself. Thus they betrayed him in presence of the enemy, and, under various pretexts, demanded their arrears of pay upon the spot, without even waiting till he could receive Italian reinforcements. All that the wretched duke could obtain from them was permission to hide himself in their ranks, dis-

[1] In the Florence Archives are certain letters sending Niccolò Machiavelli to Trivulzio, in order to fix these sums. But afterwards this idea was abandoned, the letters were not despatched, and he did not go.

[2] Molini, "Documenti di Storia Italiana," Firenze, 1836–37, vol i. pp 32–36 Desjardins gives a summary of the convention, extracted from the Florence Archives See "Négociations," &c, vol. ii. p. 26, note 1.

Here threatening complaints were soon heard respecting a pretended scarcity of provisions, and especially of wine.[1] Giovan Battista Ridolfi, who had always been opposed to asking or accepting aid of the French, from whom no good was to be expected, hurried away from the camp at the first outbreak of disorder, with the pretext of laying before the Signory the true state of the matter and procuring speedy remedies. But Luca degli Albizzi, a man of almost foolhardy courage, remained behind with Machiavelli among the mutinous troops without once losing his presence of mind. To some one who advised him to lodge at a little distance from the camp, he replied—"He who is afraid may go back to Florence,"[2] and marched on with the army. When envoys from Pisa arrived, offering to give up the city to the French, provided they would hold it twenty-five or thirty days before surrendering it to the Florentines, Beaumont wished to accept; but Albizzi refused in the name of the Signoria, saying that in a month many changes might take place, and that now being prepared for war, warlike means must be employed.[3]

At last on the 29th of June the army arrived before the walls of Pisa, numbering 8,000 men, who were still threatening mutiny because of the scarcity of provisions; nevertheless they planted their tents at night, and placed their guns in position. Albizzi, who was always among them, did all that he could to see that everything necessary was furnished, and did not lose heart, although seeing very clearly that from one moment to another he might find himself in the greatest peril. "If it be possible to

[1] One of Albizzi's letters, written on the 24th of June, was dated: "*Ex ten... bilibus Gallorum castris*," which shows that then the disorder was very gre... This letter, which has never been published, is in the Florence Archives, and l... the greater part of those sent by the Commissioners, is in Machiavelli's handwriti... It is of little interest.

[2] Among the "Carte del Machiavelli" (case 1, No. 83) is a narrative of the even... occurring at this time, written by Biagio Buonaccorsi and Agostino Vespucci, wh... were both in the Chancery, and compiled for the uses of their office. At one poi... Buonaccorsi states, that Albizzi was unwilling to allow Ridolfi to go, not wishin... to remain alone in the camp, and on the margin we find this note in another han... *Mentiris Blasi.* And when the writer says that Albizzi's presence of mind w... shown in all his actions, the same hand has written on the margin, *Immo tem... rarie.* And Buonaccorsi, in his "Impresa contro Pisa," has rendered the ample... testimony of praise to Albizzi's well-known courage. We cannot agree wi... Passerini in attributing to Machiavelli the two marginal notes Moved by th... idea, he has published a fragment of the narrative in the 3rd volume of t... "Opere" (P. M.).

[3] At a later period Machiavelli in his "Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di Ti... Livio" (bk. i. chap. xxxviii.), blamed this proceeding of the Florentines; but th... is not the place to turn our attention to that point. We will merely observe th... in those that may be called his theoretical writings, he often quotes historical fac... in his own way, and for some special reason or aim, as we shall see hereafter.

the Swiss and Gascons set out from Piacenza with twenty-two falconets and six guns, commanded, at the request of the Florentines, by Beaumont, instead of by Ives d'Alègre, whom the king wished to appoint. This Beaumont, or Belmonte as he was called, was the only one of the French leaders left in Tuscany, who had kept faith. When governor of Leghorn, he had, according to the stipulated terms, given it up to the Florentines, who, for that reason, had confidence in him alone. The new Swiss and Gascon mercenaries advanced very slowly, fining and pillaging all the places upon the road, for their own benefit, or that of their king, although they had already received their pay. When the roll-call was counted at Piacenza, it was found that there were twelve hundred more than had been agreed for, and these extra troops also had to be paid.[1] The conduct of these people would be inexplicable, did we not know what mercenaries were in those days, and if we had not already stated that Cardinal de Rouen, in order to spare the purse of his economical sovereign, tried all means of extorting money both from friends and enemies. They halted at Bologna to levy a requisition upon Bentivoglio; in Lunigiana—to the entire disapproval of the Florentines—they despoiled Alberigo Malaspina of part of his own state, at the instigation of his brother Gabriello, to whom they surrendered it. They took Pietrasanta, but did not fulfil their contract of handing it over to the Florentines. Besides this, the riots, tumults, and threatening demonstrations got up by them, in order to obtain provisions, with which, however, they were never content, were something incredible.

The Republic had sent Giovanni Battista Bartolini as Commissary to the Camp, with orders to prepare everything, but warned of the violent insolence of foreign troops, it also sent two special commissioners, Luca degli Albizzi and Giovan Battista Ridolfi, with Niccolò Machiavelli as their secretary. The mission entrusted to them was extremely arduous, for they had to accompany the army on the march, and satisfy the insatiable appetite of these famished hordes, who, at the end of a meal, were hungrier than at the beginning. Their route was to Pistoia and Pescia, and with brief despatches they kept the Signory informed of their movements. On the 18th of June they met the army at Camaiore, and accompanied it to Cascina where they arrived on the 23rd.

[1] Buonaccorsi, in his "Diario," tells us that the number of the Swiss was fixed at 5,000, but that there were 2,000 more to whom it was necessary to give two months' pay. In the "Impresa contro Pisa, *ec*" ("Archivio Storico," vol. iv. part ii. p. 404), it is stated instead that 4,000 Swiss and 2,000 Gascons was the stipulated number; but that, there being 1,200 more, it was necessary to give them a month's pay, in order to make them go back to their own country.

money, and being unable to obtain it, had seized upon Albizzi as their prisoner[1] They dragged him upon foot to the quarters of the Baily of Dijon, and from thence he wrote the same day to say that he was disputing for his life from hour to hour, in the midst of soldiery brandishing their halberds threateningly in his face. They also insisted that he should give pay to a company of about five hundred Swiss who had come from Rome, and to this most unreasonable request he had energetically refused to consent. But even in these critical moments he remained calm, and gave some useful advice in the same letter; he could not, however, refrain from bitter complaints of having been abandoned "like a lost and rejected person. If with nought else, let God at least console me by death"[2] But he could not obtain his liberation until he had signed a paper, with his personal security for the payment of 1,300 ducats to the Swiss who had come from Rome.[3] The army then dispersed, the men-at-arms being the last to depart. Thus, after heavy expenses and heavy sacrifices, the Florentines were left with a deserted camp, and with their enemies the Pisans more audacious than before.[4] New commissioners, however, Piero Vespucci and Francesco della Casa, were speedily sent to ascertain what it was possible to do, both as regarded the payment and gathering of fresh troops from the country round. The king wrote various letters, regretting what had happened, reproving the captains, threatening the soldiers, and promising to reduce Pisa at any price.[5] But these were empty words quite

[1] Dated. *Ex castris apud Pisas, die nona julii, hora* 14, is the second of those that are printed, and is to be found with the others in the Florence Archives. It is addressed to the Signory; and bears the inscription:

Cito
Cito
Cito.

[2] This is the fourth of the published letters

[3] Historians differ slightly as to the exact sum It is, however, fixed in a letter of the Signoria to Courçon "Carte del Machiavelli," case 1. *inserto* 83, p. 6.

[4] See Nardi's "Storia di Firenze," the "Diario," and Buonaccorsi's previously quoted "Impresa contro Pisa," &c.

[5] See the printed edition of the "Commissione" This, besides other documents, contains in all four letters The first and fourth are by Albizzi, the second by Machiavelli, the third by Bartolini. Only that signed by Machiavelli is in his handwriting. Passerini and Milanesi in their new edition of the "Opere," reprint these letters only, and at p 51, vol. iii. tell us that: "It is necessary to explain that we have not been able to fulfil our wish of enlarging this series, because the registers of the Signoria's correspondence, as well as of that of the Dieci, are both missing" So without adding to the Commissioner's letters they give other documents But the Florence Archives contain many more unpublished letters of this commission in the file or *filza* marked: Class x. dist 2, No 44, or according to the new classification: *Signori, Carteggio, Responsive*, reg. 17. A few others are also to be found in the 3rd file of the Strozzi Papers in the Archives.

send us some bread, you will restore our soul to our body," wrote he on the 30th of June to the Commissary Bartolini, who was then in Cascina[1] That same day they began to fire on the town, and continued firing till late in the afternoon, by which time some thirty yards of wall had been thrown down. This was the moment to give the assault and finish the affair, but it was then seen that the Pisans had dug a trench behind the wall, and thrown up works on the other side, from whence they returned the fire; so that it was impossible to proceed further. And thus once more, at the very moment when the city seemed on the point of being taken, the enterprise ended in smoke. The besieging army lost courage, and began to retire again, rioting about the scarcity or bad quality of the rations; and so great was the confusion in the ranks, that Beaumont informed Albizzi that he could no longer answer for the success of the campaign, and threw the blame of everything on the bad arrangements of the Florentines. And no protestations nor assurances sufficed to change his opinion.[2]

On the 7th of July the Gascon soldiers deserted *en masse*, upon which Albizzi wrote to Bartolini that they were to be treated as enemies. And on the following day he wrote to the Signory, that the Swiss had forced their way into his room, clamouring for money and threatening to pay themselves with his blood. "The French appear frightened, they make excuses and calm themselves with cold water; the Commander Beaumont himself has lost his head, but always insists upon having his pay. I have refrained hitherto from worrying your Excellencies in vain; but now it is absolutely necessary to decide what is to be done with these people and take measures accordingly. It might also be well to think whether it is desired that my life should be saved." "Let not your Excellencies think that cowardice moves me in this, since by no means would I flee from any peril, that should be deemed indispensable by my city." [3]

Albizzi's presentiments were realized on the following day. Machiavelli by whose pen the greater part of these letters were written, wrote from the camp in his own name, that towards three o'clock a hundred Swiss had presented themselves to demand

[1] This letter, to be mentioned hereafter, is in the Florence Archives.

[2] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 32 and fol. See also the "Impresa contro Pisa," by the same, p 413 and fol Jacopo Nardi, who copies from the "Diario," adds that the French went so far as to hide the bread and wine, in order to have pretexts for complaint. Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 227.

[3] This letter signed by Albizzi, and written in his own hand, is the first of those printed in the "Commissione in campo contro i Pisani." Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. vi. p. 32.

information to the King and contradict all unjust and calumnious accusations, while, at the same time, they could announce the speedy arrival of new ambassadors to make terms of agreement.[1]

Up to the year 1498, Niccolò Machiavelli had had little experience of mankind or of the world; his intellect had been principally devoted to books, especially to the Latin authors and the history of Rome. But during the two following years he had gained much and rapid experience of real life and State affairs. The Legation to Forlì had given him his first initiation in the intrigues of diplomacy, the Vitelli affair and the engagement of the Swiss soldiery had inspired him with a contempt almost amounting to hatred for all mercenary troops. His father's death, which took place on the 19th of May, 1500, four years after that of his mother, and only a few months before the loss of a sister, made him as it were the head of his family—although he was not the eldest son—and increased his cares and responsibilities. His journey to France opened up a new field of observation, and enlarged his mental horizon, the more too, since, in consequence of the illness of his colleague, the whole weight of the unpretending, but not unimportant mission devolved upon him.[2]

On the 18th of July, 1500, the decision or decree was passed for sending Della Casa and Machiavelli to the King. Written instructions were supplied charging them to convince the monarch that all the disorders at the camp had been solely caused by the fault of his own troops, and to try to persuade him to reduce his unjust and exorbitant claims for sums of money, in anticipation of the conquest of Pisa. Their first efforts were to be made upon the Cardinal de Rouen, and they were carefully to avoid all injurious mention of his *protégé* the Captain Beaumont. "If, however," so wrote the Signory, "you should notice any disposition to listen to things to his prejudice, you may attack him with energy and accuse him of cowardice and corruption."[3]

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario" and "Impresa," &c.; Nardi, "Storia de Firenze;" Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," Pisa, Capurro, vol. iii. book v. p. 11.

[2] On the first sheet of one of the Registers of the Ten (Florence Archives, "Lettere de' Dieci di Balia dal 1500 al 1501," class x. dist. 3. No. 93), is the following inscription:—"This book is of the Commune and relates to war matters infra dominium, scripto, for the second chancery, cuius caput est Nicolaus Machiavellus, qui hodie mittitur ad regem Francorum a dominatione Franciscus Della Casa ibidem, XVIII Julii 1500, die Sabb," &c. In the same way when he was at the camp before Pisa, we find written at the head of another register: "Hic erunt literae de rebus bellicis scriptae per magnificum dominum Marcellum ad commissarios in castris quo tempore Nicolaus Maclavellus fuit apud commissarios." See vol. vi. of the "Opere," p. 32, note 1.

[3] See the commission and the instructions at the commencement of the legation, "Opere," vol. vi. pp. 48 and fol.

unsupported by deeds. He merely sent Duplessis, lord of Courçon, styled by the Florentines *Carcon* or *Corco*, to inquire into what had happened upon the spot, and to send in a Report.

But while this was going on, the Pisans made a sally from behind their walls, captured Librafatta and soon after the *Ventura* bastion, which had been constructed at so great an expense by Vitelli. And in this manner they opened communications with Lucca, whence they received continual reinforcements. Courçon, it is true, offered more soldiers to the Florentines in the King's name, saying that with their assistance, Florence might harass the Pisans by constant skirmishes during the winter, and thus reduce them with greater ease as soon as the spring set in. But the Republic would have nothing more to do with either French or Swiss, much to the irritation of the King, who, disgusted with the result of the campaign, in which his troops had reaped nothing but dishonour, tried to throw the entire blame upon the Florentines. They had, he said, insisted on taking Beaumont as their captain instead of Ives d'Alègre whom he had proposed, and likewise had neglected to victual the army or to give it regular pay. But the real reason of his disgust was his inability to any longer saddle Florence with the maintenance of part of his army. Indeed so heavy were his threats as well as his complaints, and so diligently did the enemies of the Republic blow upon the flame, that it was thought necessary to send Messrs. Francesco della Casa and Niccolò Machiavelli as envoys to the French Court, since having both followed the camp, they were in a position to give exact

These inedited letters are of no importance, but many are in Machiavelli's handwriting, and signed first by Albizzi and Ridolfi, then, after the latter's departure, by the former alone In his hand are those of the 10th June, from Pistoia; 11th June, from Pescia; 18th June, from Camaiore, 23rd June, from Cascina; 24th June, from near Cascina, 24th June, from Cascina; 27th June, from near Campi. Also in his hand and of some interest, are those of 26th June, near Campi. 29th June, *ex Gallorum castris*; 30th June, from this camp (this is at sheet 159 of the 3rd file of the Strozzi Papers); 2nd July; *ex Gallorum castris*. Of no importance whatever are the letters dated: 4th July, from the camp; 6th July, from the camp (in this there is only a short portion written by Machiavelli); 7th July, from the camp (Strozzi Papers, 3rd file, sheet 160); from the camp without date (Strozzi Papers, 3rd file, sheet 161); 11th July, from Cascina (signed by the Commissioner Vespucci); 12th July, from Empoli (with a postscript in Machiavelli's hand). In the Archives there are also other letters belonging to this Commission, but not in Machiavelli's hand. We give none of these in the Appendix, not wishing to swell needlessly the number of the letters printed.

For this commissionership to the camp before Pisa, Machiavelli received six broad gold florins, "the which florins are bestowed upon you in remuneration for the fatigues which you supported, and the perils which you incurred" The document relating to the gift was published by Passerini, "Opere" (P. M), vol. i. p. lx.

both were granted an audience on the 7th of August, in the presence of the Cardinal, of Rubertet, Trivulzio and others. A third of the Court consisted of Italians who were all very discontented and desirous that the French army should speedily cross the Alps again.[1] The facts having been related, no sooner was an attempt made to blame the French soldiery, than the King and his supporters "quickly changed the conversation."[2] All was to be laid to the charge of the Florentines. Louis XII., for the sake of his own dignity, wished to conclude the Pisan expedition, and therefore the necessary funds must be supplied. The reply of the orators was, that the resources of the Republic being exhausted, and the people displeased by recent events, it would be impossible to procure those funds. It might however be possible to obtain them at the end of the campaign, after the surrender of Pisa But thereupon all cried aloud with one voice that this was a most unseemly proposal, for the King could not pay the expenses of the Florentines. And from day to day matters went on after the same fashion. Louis wished to send soldiers whom the Florentines refused to take ; he complained that the Swiss did not receive the amount fixed, and would not listen when it was replied that neither did they give the services promised. The Cardinal[3] irritably insisted on his view of the case,[4] and Courçon, who had just returned from Tuscany, so aggravated matters, that their aspect became threatening. "The French," wrote the two orators, "are blinded by their own power, and only think those who are armed or ready to give money worthy of their esteem. They see that these two qualities are wanting in you, so they look upon you as Sir Nihil, ascribing the impossibility to your disunion, and the dishonesty of their own army to your bad government.

[1] There is a description of the Royal Court in the second letter of the 12th of August

[2] Letter of the 7th of August.

[3] It is evident from the letter of the 11th of August that the Cardinal de Rouen did not know Italian, for the two orators were obliged to translate an Italian letter into French for him. Neither did the King know Italian, but Rubertet spoke it.

[4] According to a letter of the Signory, dated 30th of July, 1500, addressed to Gualterotti and Lenzi, Courçon had only passed one evening in the camp, "so that we do not perceive how after so short a stay he can be able to satisfy his Majesty the King about the investigation of the causes and the authors of the disorders which had there occurred" ("Carte del Machiavelli," case 1, *inserto*, 83, No 4). Passerini gives it in the "Opere" (P. M), vol. iii p 111, as a letter of the Ten ; but the Ten had not as yet been re-nominated It is also stated in this letter, tha when the Florentines explained to Courçon their reasons for not believing themselves obliged to pay the Germans, he had answered that "it was brain-splitting work to try and reason with Germans." The Germans alluded to were the German Swiss

Lorenzo Lenzi, already established for some time with Francesco Gualterotti, the Florentine ambassador in France,[1] repeated almost the same advice. They were at liberty to speak ill of the Italians at the camp, but only "as by a slip of the tongue," could they be permitted to accuse the real criminals.[2] Therefore to avoid arousing the insolence of the French, it was necessary to steer cautiously between Scylla and Charybdis. And to these difficulties was added that of the very modest social[3] position of the two envoys, who were neither wealthy nor well paid. To Francesco della Casa a stipend of eight *lire* per day was assigned, and Machiavelli, having a post of inferior rank, only succeeded in obtaining an equal sum, after much difficulty and many complaints of incurring[4] enormous expenses no lighter than those of his colleague.[5] Even then he had to disburse a great deal more than he received. His forty ducats very speedily vanished, and he had to commission his brother to obtain seventy more for him on loan. Being compelled to follow the monarch from city to city, it was requisite to provide himself with servants and horses, and although on starting, the envoys had eighty florins each, they soon got through one hundred ducats, since it proved impossible to find decent board and lodging for less than a crown and a half a day, a larger sum than that which they received. Therefore both grumbled sorely,[6] especially Machiavelli, who was not rich, and yet had no talent for economy.

Meanwhile, the two envoys on reaching Lyons on the 28th of July, found that the King had already started. They caught him up at Nevers, and after having spoken with the Cardinal de Rouen,

[1] The Florentines, after having sent three ambassadors in June, 1498, to congratulate the King upon his ascension to the throne, elected Francesco Gualterotti and Lorenzo Lenzi on the 18th of September, 1499. Salviati was also sent with them as far as Milan to congratulate the King upon his victory, and if the terms for the Pisan affair were not yet signed, to obtain the royal signature. The two ambassadors then went to France in the suite of the King, who left Milan on the 22nd of November, 1499. See Desjardins, "Négociations," &c.

[2] Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. vi. p. 54.

[3] In this letter of the 30th of July, Machiavelli says, "We being men of no money and no credit."

[4] On the 27th of August, 1500, Totto writes to his brother Niccolò Machiavelli, that after a fortnight of continued efforts, the Signori had consented to equalize the salaries. He adds that he had spent eleven florins for him in the spring, and afterwards sent him fifty more. This letter is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case 1, No. 8, and has been published by Nitti, in his work, "Machiavelli nella vita e nelle dottrine," vol. 1. p. 89. The increase of stipend alluded to, only began from the 28th of August, as may be seen by the accounts in the archives (class xiii dist. 6, No 64, a. c 90).

[5] Letter of the 12th of August, signed by Machiavelli only.

[6] See letters of the 29th of August and 3rd of September.

here, the direction of all things being in his hands, hopes to receive efficacious protection from that quarter." But whenever he touched upon money matters, the Cardinal fell into fresh fury, and threateningly said, "that the Florentines knew how to reason finely, but would repent of their obstinacy in the end."[1]

After this, fortunately, the aspect of affairs began to greatly improve, owing to the election of a new ambassador, Pier Francesco Losinghi, with much wider powers, and the permission obtained by the Signory from the Councils for granting a fresh sum of money; thus Machiavelli had less difficulty in calming the French wrath and continuing his discourses upon general politics He even obtained an explicit assurance that Valentinois would not be allowed to injure Tuscany.[2] But on the 21st of November he learnt from a friend that the Pope was doing his best to make mischief, asserting that he should be able, with the expected aid of the Venetians, to replace Piero dei Medici in Florence, and that Piero would speedily pay any amount of money the King wished. His Holiness also promised to deprive Bentivoglio of his state, while as to Ferrara and Mantova, who showed so much liking for Florence, he would "bring their necks under the yoke."

Upon hearing this, Machiavelli instantly went to seek the Cardinal, and finding him at leisure, was able to speak with him at length. To combat the Pope's calumnies of the Florentines, he dwelt "not upon their good faith, but upon its being their interest to side with the French. The Pope tries by all means to compass the destruction of the King's friends, to wrest Italy from his hands with greater ease." "But His Majesty should follow the method of those who have before wished to possess a foreign province, which is, to abase the powerful, caress their subjects, maintain friends, and beware of comrades, that is, of those who desire equal authority in such a place." "And certainly it is not the Florentines, neither is it Bologna nor Ferrara, who desire to mate with the King; but rather those who have always pretended to the domination of Italy, namely, the Venetians, and above all, the Pope." The Cardinal gave affable attention to these theories which the modest secretary, warming as he went on, expounded almost in the accents of a master, and replied that the King "had long ears and short belief; that he listened to all, but believed in nothing but that which he could touch with his

[1] Letters of the 11th of October, from Blois. By this letter it is shown that Machiavelli was accustomed to speak Latin with the Cardinal de Rouen.

[2] Letter of the 4th of November from Nantes. It seems that this conversation was held in French.

The ambassadors resident here have gone away, nor do we hear that new ones are coming. Our degree and quality, on an unwelcome errand, do not suffice to bring sinking things to the surface.[1] The King therefore is highly displeased, always lamenting having had to pay the Swiss 38,000 francs, which according to the Convention of Milan, you ought to have paid, and he threatens to erect Pisa and the neighbouring territory into an independent State."[2] Then, as a piece of good advice, they suggested that the Republic "should try to obtain by bribery some friends in France who would be stirred by more than natural affection, since that is what has to be done by all who have affairs at this Court. And he who refuses to do it is like one who would win a suit without feeing his attorney."[3]

Up to the 14th of September the letters were always signed by both envoys, though nearly all were written by Machiavelli. But on that day the King left Melun, and Della Casa, being ill, went to Paris for advice; so that Machiavelli was left alone to continue the journey, and pursue the mission, which, after the 26th of September, increased in its importance, and extended over a wider field. He did not confine himself to the one affair, with which he was encharged, but investigated the various questions bearing upon Italian policy, and sent precise details of everything, first to the Signory, and then to the Ten, who were re-elected during this period; and he showed so much zeal, so much ardour in all these matters, that occasionally he almost seemed to lose sight of the special and very limited object of his mission. By the use, now of Latin and now of French—for neither King nor Cardinal could speak Italian—he conversed with both and questioned every one. And now for the first time the penetration and originality of his intellect, the power and marvellous vigour of his style, began to be manifest. While travelling with the Cardinal de Rouen, and finding him still inflexible regarding the money, he turned the conversation upon the army which the Pope was forming, with the help of France, to forward the designs of Valentinois. And he was able to discover, "that if the King had conceded everything for the expedition in Romagna, it was rather because he knew not how to withstand the unbridled desires of the Pope, than from any real desire for his success."[4]

"Yet," continued Machiavelli, "the more does he fear Germany, so much the more he favours Rome, because there is the well-armed head of Religion, and also because he is urged in that direction by the Cardinal, who, knowing himself to have many enemies

[1] Letter of the 27th of August. [2] Letter of the 29th of August, from Melun.
[3] Letter of the 14th of September. [4] Letters of the 2nd and 8th of October.

"Discorsi" and the "Principi" is already apparent. Those maxims, afterwards expounded by Machiavelli in a scientific shape, are here hurriedly sketched with an uncertain touch, and as it were by chance; in succeeding despatches we shall see them gradually assuming a firmer outline, and clearer development. Even his style now began to acquire the vigour, that was soon to enable him to paint true and living men with a few strokes of his pen, to express his thoughts with truly wonderful lucidity, and hence to deserve his universally acknowledged title of the first of Italian prose writers. It will therefore surprise no one to learn that this mission to France brought great honour to Machiavelli in Florence, and that Buonaccorsi, as far back as the 23rd of August, wrote to tell him with unfeigned joy, that his despatches had been highly commended by the most influential citizens.[1] Yet in August he was still with Della Casa, who, as chief envoy, placed his signature first. We may therefore well imagine that the Republic was increasingly satisfied with its secretary.

On his return home, Machiavelli applied himself with his usual ardour to his office work, and the registers of the chancery were again filled day by day with his letters Business was soon carried on with greater regularity, either because he exercised much authority over his subordinates, or because the Ten now re-elected,—who had been chosen among those most experienced in military matters,—were less distracted by other cares, and remained in office six months, instead of two only, like the Signory. Also, by the decree of the 18th of September, 1500, which replaced them in office, their attributes were better defined and restricted; they could no longer, of their own authority, make peace, form a league or engage troops for more than one week, and in all important matters, required the sanction of the Eighty before pronouncing their decision.[2]

[1] This letter of Buonaccorsi is included, like his others, among the "Carte del Machiavelli" (case 1, No. 7).

[2] Florence Archives: "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," register 191, at sheet 26.

hand "[1] And this may have been the occasion when, the Cardinal having said that the Italians knew nothing about war, Machiavelli made the reply that the French knew nothing of statesmanship, "for understanding that, they would never have allowed the Church to attain to so much greatness."[2]

On the 24th of November he wrote the two final despatches of this Legation. By that time the progress of Valentinois had become very threatening, and the Florentines, in their keen anxiety on that head, had not only hastened the departure of the new ambassador, but promised the representatives of France that they would shortly send money to the king. The latter therefore waited more patiently, and sent special orders to Valentinois, forbidding him to attack either Bologna or Florence. Having given this news in his first letter, Machiavelli wrote the second on the same day, to recommend the suit of a certain Giulio de Scruciatis,[3] a Neapolitan, against the heirs of the Bandini family in Florence. "De Scruciatis had rendered and might again render useful services to the Republic. I know nothing," he continued, "of this lawsuit of his; but I do know that while your standing with his French Majesty is so airy and precarious, few can help you, and all can injure you. Wherefore it is necessary to soothe him with smooth words, otherwise at the first letter of yours that comes here, he will be like a thunderbolt in this court;" "and the evil he may say will be believed more easily than any good that he may have said; furthermore, he is a man of some credit, very daring, loquacious, persistent, terrible, and being without measure in his passions, is capable of effecting somewhat in all that he undertakes." And having written these things Machiavelli made ready to leave France.

The reader will have perceived how in certain portions of these despatches, a foreshadowing—if as yet misty—of the author of the

[1] Letter of the 21st of November. This is addressed to the Ten who had already been re-elected, on which matter Machiavelli had congratulated them in his letter of the 2nd of October. [2] "Principe," at the end of chap iii.

[3] In Florence he was known as Scurcigliato, Scorciato, or Scruciato, and so even Machiavelli calls him in his letters. He belonged to the De Scruciatis family of Castelluccio, Neapolitan nobles; he was a judge of the Vicaria, counsellor of Santa Chiara, fiscal advocate, and was one of those who had passed judgment on Antonello Petrucci, and the other members of the conspiracy of the barons. Ferdinand of Naples held him for one of his most faithful instruments, and made frequent use of him in the commission of his principal iniquities. Later, however, on the decline of the Aragonese fortunes, De Scruciatis forsook them in favour of the French, who, in 1499, named him a Roman senator. He afterwards followed the French camp, held many posts and filled missions even in Tuscany, committed rascalities of many descriptions, and ended in Rome as an inquisitor of the Holy Office.

Ten, in date of the 28th of April, 1501.[1] The Pistoians wished to banish the Panciatichi, on account of their known hostility to Florence; but, on the 4th of May, Machiavelli wrote to them in the name of the Signory, that it would be highly dangerous to keep the Cancellieri within the town and the Panciatichi without, since thus they might suddenly "lose all the city or all its territory, and perhaps both together, the one being full of malcontents, the other full of suspicion." In conclusion, he insisted on the immediate execution of the orders of the government, and bade them employ the forces sent there, to compel the Panciatichi to re-enter the town unarmed and ensure their being kept under surveillance.[2]

Heavier anxieties soon assailed Florence from another quarter. Valentinois, prevented from attacking Bologna by the French prohibition, now turned towards Tuscany, and having seized upon Bersighella, the key of the Val di Lamone, and gained the assistance of Dionigi Naldi,[3] a military man with influential connections in those parts, had the whole district at his mercy. In threatening terms he next requested free passage through the territories of the Republic, alleging that he wished to lead his troops back to Rome. And the Florentines, knowing with whom they had to deal, sent to him a certain Piero Del Bene, one of his own personal friends, sent a commissary of war to Castrocaro on the frontier, and despatched a special envoy to Rome to inform the French ambassador of all that had happened: at the same time they prepared 20,000 ducats[4] to be forwarded to Louis XII, to make him—as in fact it did make him—more decidedly favourable to their cause. Meanwhile a thousand different

[1] Published by Passerini in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iii. p. 279. The sum was 500 florins, half of which went to the injured parties, a fourth to the magistrate who exacted it, the other fourth for the repairs of the Pistoia fortresses. See also the "Sommario della Città" and the "Sommario del Contado," included among the "Carte del Machiavelli" (case 1, No. 12), and published by Passerini, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iii p. 355. They consist of the measures decreed and the rules to be followed for the restoration of order in the city and its territory. They are official documents of no literary value, and should not be included among Machiavelli's Works, not being even written by his pen.

[2] "Opere" (P. M.), vol iii p 299 The letter also contains other orders and details not in Machiavelli's hand. His signature is appended to this and other letters published by Passerini. It must, however, be observed that Machiavelli's signature, which very often is in another's handwriting, is merely used in these cases to indicate the head of the office, and thus is appended to letters written by his coadjutors, as well as to those written by himself. It is therefore necessary to examine the handwriting

[3] Called indifferently *Dionigi Naldi*, *Naldo*, and *di Naldo*.

[4] See the letter of the Ten dated the 3rd of May, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iii. p. 298



CHAPTER IV.

Tumults in Pistoia, whither Machiavelli is sent—Valentinois in Tuscany; the Condotta stipulated with the Florentines by him—New French army in Italy—Fresh riots in Pistoia, and Machiavelli again sent there—The war with Pisa goes on—Rebellion of Arezzo, and the Val di Chiana—Machiavelli and Bishop Soderini despatched to Valentinois's Court at Urbino—The French come to assist in putting down disorders in Arezzo—"On the method of treating the rebellious population of the Val di Chiana"—Creation of a Gonfalonier for life.

(1501–1502.)



THERE was certainly no lack of public business, although the hostilities with Pisa were somewhat slackened. At Pistoia the bloody conflicts between the Cancellieri and the Panciatichi had assumed the gravest proportions; the Panciatichi having been driven from the city, which was still subject to Florence, but ever on the eve of rebellion. To restore order therefore it was necessary to send special commissioners, men and arms. Machiavelli not only conducted the correspondence, gave orders, was applied to for advice by the Signory and the Ten; but had frequently to go in person to Pistoia. And it is there that we find him in February and June, in order to see for himself and report upon the state of things.

Many members of both factions were confined in Florence, all the others requested to return to Pistoia; that commune binding itself to defend them and indemnify them for all fresh injury, by the payment of a large sum of money for which the offenders would be liable, according to a decree of the Signory and the

that army of freebooters [1] At last the Duke, seeing how dangerous a turn matters were taking and knowing that the Florentines were really under the protection of the French, declared that he wished to be on terms of sincere friendship with them, and would accept an engagement as their captain. He added, however, that they must grant him free passage to continue his expedition against Piombino, and must also change their form of government and recall Piero dei Medici, as a guarantee that they would carry out their promises.

In order to combat these pretensions, the Florentines first of all armed another thousand men within the city, insisting on greater zeal and watchfulness on all sides; then they sent Cæsar their reply. As regarded the Piombino expedition, he was, they told him, at liberty to continue his march, but as for changing their government, he might hold his tongue about it, for that was no business of his, and no one in Florence would have aught to do with the Medici. Whereupon Valentinois, on his arrival at Campi, without alluding to other subjects, let it be known that he would be satisfied with a condotta, or engagement, of 36,000 ducats annually for three years, without obligation of active service, but always in readiness to supply 300 men-at-arms in case of emergency. In short, after the usual fashion of the Borgia, other things failing, he determined at least to have money. The Florentines, in order to be rid of him, signed a convention on the 15th of May, 1501, granting the condotta and concluding a perpetual alliance with him [2] They hoped to avoid paying him a farthing, and the Duke, although aware of this, accepted the terms, because, were the money not forthcoming, he would have a good excuse for further aggressions at the first convenient opportunity. Meanwhile he went on his way sacking and pillaging, and reached Piombino on the 4th of June There he could do nothing but seize a few neighbouring domains and the island of Pianosa; he then crossed over to Elba with some ships sent by the Pope [3]

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. 1 p 242.

[2] "Archivio Storico," vol xv p 269. According to this convention the Duke was to be ready to bring 300 men-at arms for the defence of the Republic, on any emergency; for other enterprises he was to receive three months' notice, and was not bound to come in person; he might, however, be obliged to accompany the French on the expedition to Naples. This last clause suited the Duke's purpose, since he knew that he must go with the French in any case, and he would thus receive his money without added obligations; it also suited the Florentines, since, being pledged to assist the king with men-at-arms, they might, when necessary, fulfil both compacts with the same sum of money.

[3] Buonaccorsi in his "Diario" (pp. 44 and 45) does not speak of the journey to Elba; Nardi, however, mentions it, and also Guicciardini in his "Storia d' Italia." But the latter, in his "Storia Fiorentina" (chap iii. p 244), says that it was then that Valentinois drove away the Lord of Piombino, an event which took place later.

rumours were afloat: the Siennese and Lucchese were sending continual reinforcements to Pisa, where Oliverotto, one of Valentinois's officers, had marched in with a few horsemen; the Vitelli were helping the Panciatichi to revenge themselves upon their enemies, and so on, and so on. All these matters had to be attended to, and Machiavelli did the work of several men, writing letters and issuing orders to captains, commissaries and magistrates.[1] Fortunately, however, news arrived from France, with promises of certain aid, and thus the Republic had a respite from its worst anxieties during the month of May.

But Valentinois continued his attempts. News reached Florence that the Orsini and the Vitelli were already menacing the frontiers; that a certain Ramazzotto, an old adherent of the Medici, had presented himself in Firenzuola, demanding the State in the name of the Duke, and of Piero dei Medici[2] And men's minds were so stirred in Florence by these events, that there was even a talk of creating a Balìa with extraordinary powers, and,[3] although this was not done, necessary measures were taken to defend the city from any sudden attack. Irregular native troops who had been summoned from the Mugello and the Casentino and were commanded by the abbot Don Basilio, were stationed all round Florence; others arrived from Romagna; and more men were collected within the walls. Machiavelli was the life and soul of these military movements, and devoted himself to them with a zeal that was most singular in a literary man of his stamp. But in fact—contrary to the prevailing opinion of the time—he had lost all faith in mercenary troops, and these irregulars seeming to him the germ of a national militia, destined to defend their country, after the manner of the ancient Romans, this was enough to inflame his enthusiasm.

When all these arrangements were concluded, ambassadors were sent to the Duke, giving him permission to pass through the territories if he chose; but with small bodies of men at the time, and without the Orsini or the Vitelli. Upon this he angrily advanced through the Mugello, his soldiers pillaging as they went, and insulting every one; for which reason the popular irritation rose to a high pitch both in town and country, and there was universal outcry against the "asinine patience" of the magistrates who had the greatest trouble to prevent a general rising against

[1] An enormous number of letters were written by Machiavelli during these months, and they exist in his handwriting in the Florence Archives We only quote from a few of those in the file which is countersigned: class x. dist. 3, No. 95, at sheets 12, 18, 30, 92, 103, 163, 183, &c.

[2] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p. 239; Buonaccorsi, "Diario."

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap. xxii. p. 237.

these affairs with the utmost zeal, and finally, at heaven's pleasure, the army left Tuscany and passed into the States of the Church. Only then was the Pope informed of the secret treaty concluded at Granada between the kings of Spain and France, and, with his accustomed cynicism, he promised investiture to both sovereigns.

On the arrival of the French at the Neapolitan frontier, the unhappy Frederic gathered together his scanty forces, having already placed his sole hope in the help of Spain, whose army was commanded by the valiant Gonsalvo of Cordova. But at this moment the latter announced that he must give up his estates in the Neapolitan kingdom, since his duties as Frederic's vassal were no longer compatible with those of a Spanish captain Thus the miserable monarch was left utterly forsaken, and shortly the whole of his kingdom was occupied by foreigners. Capua only held out against the French, but in July it was taken by assault, cruelly sacked, and cost the lives of seven thousand persons. Guicciardini asserts that not even cloistered virgins were respected by the soldiery, that many women in their despair cast themselves into the Volturno, and others took refuge in a tower. According to the same writer, Valentinois, who had followed the army with his guards, but without a command, and had plunged during the sack into every excess, went to inspect these women in order to choose for himself forty of the loveliest among them.

On the 19th of August the French entered Naples, and shortly after Frederic surrendered entirely to the king, who gave him the Duchy of Anjou in France, with a revenue of 30,000 ducats. There he died on the 9th September, 1504, his sons, one after the other, followed him to the grave, and with them was extinguished the Neapolitan House of Aragon. Gonsalvo, in the meantime, had seized, without meeting any resistance, the portion of the kingdom belonging to Spain. The treaty of Granada, however, had been drawn up—not perhaps altogether by chance—in a manner which allowed of different interpretations of the due division. Soon indeed it was plain, that one or the other of the two potentates must remain master of the whole kingdom, and the final decision be made by arms. Nevertheless a temporary agreement was patched up between the two armies, who jointly governed the disputed provinces.

On the 3rd of September the troops of Duke Cæsar marched into Piombino; Appiani fled for his life, and in February the Pope in person came with his son to examine the plans of the fortresses which the latter was having built there.[1] Thus the Florentines again saw the dreaded enemy at their gates, while at

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 53.

But he was speedily recalled to the mainland to join the French who were returning from the Neapolitan war; and then, leaving the few places he had conquered well garrisoned, he hurried to Rome, entering it as a conqueror, although his campaigns had been rather those of a freebooter than of a military chief.

But if the Neapolitan war freed the Republic of the Duke's presence, it entailed evils and anxieties of another kind. The French army was composed of 1,000 lances and 10,000 infantry, 4,000 of whom were Swiss, exclusive of a force of 6,000 men, who were coming by sea; they advanced in two bodies, one of which, with the larger portion of the artillery, marched by Pontremoli and Pisa, while the other, coming down by Castrocaro, was to traverse nearly the whole of Tuscany. Besides these, small bodies of the Duke's men under Oliverotto di Fermo, Vitellozzo Vitelli and other captains, came straggling in the rear, either pillaging as they passed, or going to Pisa to help the rebels. It was therefore necessary to write to the various Commissaries and Podestas, instructing them to furnish provisions for the army, and defend themselves from the roving soldiery; it was also necessary to find 12,000 ducats to satisfy the French who were always demanding money on the pretext of arrears owing to the Swiss who had served the Republic so badly.[1] Machiavelli entered into all

[1] In the Florence Archives are many letters of this period, also written by Machiavelli, which are still inedited. We call attention to a few only. On the 18th of May he announces the Condotta concluded with Valentinois (Cl. x. dist 3, No. 96, sheet 23). On the 28th of the same month (at sheet 41) he says that Valentinois has come, and "with his innumerable turpitudes has ravaged and reduced to famine half our land." On the 2nd of June orders are given to send all women and children away from Cascina, on account of the passage of the army. An undated letter (at sheet 57 of the same file) orders that all those of Valentinois' men who had been captured should be set at liberty, with the exception of Dionigi Naldi. One of the 16th July (sheet 77 retro) is addressed to Luigi Della Stufa, who is directed to pacify the factions in Scarperia, and keep an eye upon Vitellozzo's men, who have appeared in that neighbourhood.

Many others are to be found in the following file, marked No 97. In a letter of 7th July (same file, 97) Piero Vespucci is told: We command thee *not* to give a safe conduct to Oliverotto di Fermo. If it be already given, withdraw it, and give orders "that he should be seized, stripped of everything, treated as an enemy" (file 97 a.c. 73). On the 8th of July to the same: We are content with the orders given against Oliverotto. Forty of Don Michele's horse are expected in Pisa. If they come, "do thy best to plunder them and treat them as enemies" Do not, however, seek to pick quarrels, for we do not want a new war, unless they provoke us to it, as if, for instance, they were to send troops to Pisa (folio 74). On the 13th to the commissaries of Leghorn and Rosignano: "The Lord of Piombino advises us that a Turkish fleet of sixty sail has appeared near Pianosa, seemingly bound for Genoa. Should they disembark in search of victuals, allow them to do so, telling them that we are good friends of their Lord. But if they attempt to march inland, you must try to stop them, and gain time by waiting for instructions" (at sheet 77). And thus many more of the same kind.

money Florence refused to pay, but she found herself compe
to promise France the sum of 120,000 ducats payable within th
years, for a treaty of alliance concluded on the 12th April, 1
by which the king was bound to protect the Republic, and sup
it on demand with 400 lances[1] All these things, while insuffic
to frighten away Valentinois, who was marching slowly forw
had utterly exhausted the treasury of the Republic, which kn
not what fresh tax to invent, after levying even the *Decima sca*
or graduated tithe, a species of progressive tax.[2] On this acco
the war with Pisa was almost suspended, and restricted to r
on Pisan territory The Florentines, extremely dissatisfied w
the Ten, declined to re-elect them, and placed the conduct of
war in the hands of a Commission chosen by the Signoria, wh
upon all things went from bad to worse.[3] The Pisans, in f
assumed the offensive, advanced on Vico Pisano, took possessio
it, and continued the negotiations begun in the preceding Decem
with the Pope and Valentinois, for the formation of an indep
dent State stretching to the coast, including the inland terri
occupied by the Florentines, with whom neither peace nor tr
was ever to be made. Valentinois was to have the title of D
of Pisa, and the Duchy was to be hereditary; the time-hono
magistrature of the Anziani (elders) was to be preserved, and
of the Borgia was to be named Archbishop of Pisa.[4] Th
designs were never carried out, but they sufficed to cause anx
to the Florentines, against whom the Borgia tried to stir
enemies on every side, for the purpose, as they now pretended
uniting all Italy in a league against foreigners in general and
French in particular.

Meanwhile Vitellozzo was already close upon Arezzo with
manifest purpose of exciting a rebellion there, and Valenti
was at a short distance, feigning to take no part in the proc
ings of one of his own captains[5] The Republic, having at
moment no troops at its command, hurriedly despatched as

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," pp. 49-53; Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," c
xxiii

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxi. This tax was very he
although part of it was placed to the credit of the contributor and considered
loan, as Canestrini tells us in his work, "La Scienza e l'Arte di Stato," Flore
Le Monnier, 1862. [3] Ibid., chap. xxiii.

[4] Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. ii. pp. 69-70.

[5] The Venetian ambassador wrote from Rome on the 7th June, 1502, that
Arezzo business was "an old scheme of the Duke," and on the 20th June
added, that the Pope, "ever intent on his own private passions," in spite of
vigorous French protest regarding the affair of Arezzo, spoke of nothing but
and the other enterprises of his Duke. See the "Dispacci" of A Giustinian

the same time the Lucchese and Pisans were becoming more daring, and France once more slackening in her friendship, although the Republic, after having already given her 30,000 ducats for the Swiss, was now negotiating to pay her from 120 to 150,000 within three or four years, for the sake of the usual promise of the conquest of Pisa.[1]

And while these things were keeping the Republic in ever increasing difficulties, and making the Ten more and more unpopular, urgent demands for aid arrived from Pistoia, for that city was again a prey to the fury of the two factions, and no manner of government was possible there. Machiavelli, who in July had already gone there for the second time, was again sent twice in the month of October, to take instructions, and to consult, on his return, with the Ten and the Signoria,[2] as to what was necessary to be done

According to instructions received, he wrote that the sole remedy to be thought of at present was to reform the government and administration of the city, by immediately recalling the Panciatichi, and then afterwards take measures about the territory, where still greater evils were rife.[3] During these months, besides all these letters, orders, and instructions, Machiavelli also indited, as secretary, an official report of the events at Pistoia, to give the magistrates a clearer idea of the whole.[4] Many such reports or narratives of what happened in the territories of the Republic were compiled in the chanceries of the Ten and the Signoria, and this by Machiavelli was likewise a strictly official work of no particular interest.

Hardly had the Pistoian disturbances been put down, than news came in May, 1502, that Vitellozzo and the Orsini were advancing on the Val di Chiana, followed at a short distance by the Duke of Valentinois. And the Emperor Maximilian, desiring to come to Italy to be crowned, asked of the Florentines—under the usual pretext of making war on the Turks—the sum of 100,000 ducats, of which 60,000 were to be paid down on the nail. This

[1] See in Desjardins ("Négociations," &c., vol. ii. pp 43–69), the various instructions sent to the ambassadors in France.

[2] Machiavelli, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iii pp. 330, 332. In the August of that year he had also been sent to Sienna, to Pandolfo Petrucci, to Pistoia, and to Cascina. See the documents at p 358 of the same volume. Another document would seem to show that in May he had been sent to Bologna to confer with Giovanni Bentivoglio, but there is no proof that he really went there.

[3] See in the "Opere" (vol. vi. p. 166) a letter of the Signoria, dated 26th October, 1501, almost entirely in Machiavelli's hand. Guicciardini speaks of these disorders on Pistoian territory in his "Storia Fiorentina," pp. 269–70.

[4] "Opere" (P. M), p. 352.

Therefore only the two first despatches of this legation are written by him, and both bear the signature of Bishop Soderini. In the second dated from Urbino the 26th of June, *ante lucem*, we find a description of Borgia, clearly showing how profound an impression eh had already produced upon the mind of the Florentine secretary. They gained audience on the evening of the 24th at two o'clock of the night,[1] in the palace inhabited by the Duke and a few of his men, who kept the doors well locked and guarded Borgia told the envoys that he wished to be on a clear footing with the Florentines, their firm friend or declared enemy Should they decline his friendship, he would be justified, before both God and man, in seeking by every means to ensure the safety of his own dominions which bordered upon theirs along so extended a frontier. "I desire to have explicit surety since too well I know that your city is not well minded towards me, but would abandon me like an assassin, and has already sought to plunge me in heavy embroilments with the Pope and King of France. This government of yours does not please me, and you must change it, otherwise if you refuse me for a friend, you shall know me for an enemy." The envoys replied that Florence had the government which she desired, and that none throughout Italy could boast of keeping better faith. That if the Duke's intentions were really friendly he could easily prove it by compelling Vitellozzo, who was in fact his subordinate, to withdraw at once Upon this the Duke asserted that Vitellozzo and the others were acting on their own account, although he was by no means ill-pleased that the Florentines should, without any fault of his, receive a severe and merited lesson Nor was it possible to get anything else out of him, whereupon the ambassadors hurried to write their despatches, feeling that it was most necessary to acquaint the government with the Duke's motives in sending for them, the more so "as these people's mode of action is to sneak into others' houses before they are aware of it, as was the case of the last Lord of this place, whose death was heard of before his illness"[2]

The Duke had also asserted that he was sure of France, and caused the same to be repeated to them by the Orsini, who not only gave it to be understood that Vitellozzo's expedition had been undertaken by agreement with that country, but added that all was in readiness for a speedy invasion of Tuscany with twenty or twenty-five thousand men, which force however the orators

[1] *I.e.*, two hours after sunset, according to the old style.
[2] This was Guidobaldo di Montefeltro, Duke of Urbino.

commissary, Gugliemo de Pazzi, father of the Bishop of Arezzo, who was already on the spot. But the commissary had barely arrived when the people broke into rebellion (4th June), and both father and son had to take refuge with the captain in the fortress. Vitellozzo then entered the town with 120 men-at-arms and a good number of foot soldiers, soon followed by Giovan Paolo Baglioni, another of the Duke's captains, with fifty men-at-arms and five hundred infantry. To face these dangers, France was requested to send the promised contingent of four hundred lances, and also Piero Soderini was sent to Milan to ensure their departure. The troops encamped before Pisa received orders to advance by the Val di Chiana, where Antonio Giacomini Tebalducci, was sent as commissary, and likewise to fill the post of captain. This man had dedicated himself to military studies for some time, and already had given proofs of the immense superiority of patriot captains over mercenaries[1] Machiavelli, who was in constant correspondence with him, and followed his career step by step, now renewed his observations and matured his ideas on the subject of a national militia.

Meanwhile events were hurrying on, for the citadel of Arezzo, after holding out for a fortnight, had to surrender without being able to receive succour from the troops on the march from the camp before Pisa. The latter therefore received orders to retire on Montevarchi, while the enemies, with their Arezzo reinforcements, occupied the whole of the Val di Chiana, and had been already joined by Piero dei Medici and his brother.[2] The Florentines, as may easily be imagined, awaited most anxiously the French contingent which was to rescue them from their imminent danger, and while in this suspense, a message came from Valentinois demanding that some one should be sent to confer with him. Francesco Soderini, Bishop of Volterra, was chosen for this mission, and was accompanied by Niccolò Machiavelli. The Duke was at that time at Urbino, which he had seized by treachery, and the unhappy Guidobaldo di Montefeltro had barely saved his life by hurried flight to the mountains, although he had always considered himself the friend of the Borgia, and assisted them with the very troops, whom they had roused against him to strip him of his State.

Machiavelli only remained a few days with Soderini, having then to return to Florence to give *viva voce* details to the Signory.

[1] Nardi, "Vita di Antonio Giacomini." Napier, in his "Florentine History" (vol. iv. p. 105), tells us on the authority of Jacopo Pitti (book i. p. 77), that Giacomini's appointment caused the re-election of the Ten.

[2] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 54 and fol.

under the command of La Trémoille. The Florentines therefore must have pay and provisions ready for them.[1] And very soon the Captain Imbault appeared with a small troop before Arezzo, and speedily brought Vitellozzo to terms. The latter was to surrender all the places he had taken excepting the city he was then occupying, and where he was to be allowed to remain with Piero dei Medici until the return of Cardinal Orsini, who had gone to treat with the King in person. But even this concession —which the Florentines rightly considered unseemly,[2]—was afterwards withdrawn, because the Pope and the Duke—throwing the blame of everything on Vitellozzo and the Orsini whom they mortally hated—abandoned them altogether; neither in fact did they care much about the Medici, precisely for the reason that these were friends and relatives of the Orsini.[3] On the contrary they pledged themselves to assist France in the Neapolitan expedition.[4] And the Florentines having previously settled that Captain Imbault, who had not satisfied them, should be superseded by De Langres,[5] soon recovered all their territory, a circumstance which was made known in an epistle of the 28th of August, together with orders for public festivals to be held in commemoration of the event.[6]

Towards the middle of August Machiavelli was sent to the French camp, to accompany De Langres and collect information prejudicial to Imbault, but he was not long absent from his post. Piero Soderini and Luca degli Albizzi, both men of great influence, had been sent to Arezzo for the purpose of restoring order as soon as the rebellion should be quelled, and preventing De Langres from going away too soon, since the Florentine forces were all engaged in keeping back the Pisans, who were advancing in the opposite quarter.[7] Meanwhile he wrote from his Chancery, pray-

[1] Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. ii. p. 70.

[2] *Vide* letter of the 30th July in Canestrini's "Scritti Inediti," p. 19.

[3] The Venetian ambassador in Rome plainly stated in a letter of July, 1502, that the Pope had been compelled by orders from France, to insist on the withdrawal of Vitellozzo and the Orsini from Arezzo; but that he had no real desire to reinstate the Medici in Florence, for they were friends of the Orsini whom he wished to root out. See the "Dispacci" of A. Giustinian, especially those dated 1st and 7th July. Then Buonaccorsi at page 54 of his "Diario," tells us that Valentinois would have willingly joined the Florentines in injuring the Orsini and Vitelli, but did not dare to speak his mind for fear of meeting with a refusal.

[4] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 62.

[5] Ibid., p. 63; Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti," p. 21. Worthy too of note are the letters of 4th August and following in the Florence Archives, class x. dist. 3, No. 100, at sheets 68 and fol.

[6] Florence Archives, class x. dist. 3, No. 101, at sheet 104.

[7] Letters of the 3rd, 4th, and 6th September, 1502, in the Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 100, folio 107, 109, and 111.

reckoned at sixteen thousand only. "This Duke," said the letter in conclusion, "is so enterprising that nothing is too great to seem small to him, and for the sake of glory and the extension of his dominions, he deprives himself of rest, yielding to no fatigue, no danger. He arrives at this place before one hears that he has left the other, he gains the goodwill of his soldiers, he has got hold of the best men in Italy and has constant good luck; all which things make him victorious and formidable" But the fact was, that he knew that the French were coming to the aid of the Florentines, and therefore wished to bind the latter at any price. Accordingly, at three o'clock of the night of the 25th, after the orators had already spoken with Orsini, he sent for them again to signify that he wished an instant reply from the Signoria, nor would he grant them a longer delay than of four days. So the letter,[1] finished at dawn, was instantly sent off by a special courier, followed closely by Machiavelli himself, who had nothing more to do at Urbino. He went away filled with a strange intellectual admiration of this enemy of his country, which admiration was probably increased by that already inspired by Borgia in Bishop Soderini[2] The latter remained with the Duke, who daily increased both his demands and his threats. The Florentines, however, paid slight attention to these, for they knew that the French contingent was already on the road. For the same reason, when Giacomini—who on this occasion had shown marvellous courage and activity—now wrote to say that if they sent him three thousand foot soldiers and a thousand irregulars he would be able to attack the enemy, they replied in the first week in July, that he need only stand on the defence, for that the artillery and four thousand Swiss sent by France were already on their way. They added that it would be necessary to pay these troops at once, and it would therefore be imprudent to involve the Republic in fresh expenses, especially as Valentinois himself seemed already folding his wings.[3] And they wrote to the same effect at later dates.[4]

On the 24th of July the King wrote that horse and foot would speedily arrive, together with a sufficient supply of artillery,

[1] The greater part of this letter, with a few by Soderini, was published by us at the end of vol. i. of the "Dispacci" of A. Giustinian. Passerini has published all the documents of the legation, which, as we have already said, only include two by Machiavelli. "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iv.

[2] Machiavelli himself says this. as we shall shortly see.

[3] Letters of the 1st and 12th July, in the Florence Archives, class x. dist. 3, No 101, sheets 2 and 24. See Appendix, document v.

[4] Letters of the 2nd, 4th, and 15th July, in the "Scritti Inediti" published by Canestrini, pp. 3, 5, and 8.

duct. Certainly in those days it was a daringly original idea to have recourse to antiquity and history, in order—by comparison with recent experiences—to discover the principles regulating the movements of human actions, and bound to regulate those of governments. But if history teaches us the successive order of human affairs, it also shows the continual mutations of mankind and society, and the difficulty of discovering absolute and unchangeable rules. In truth, on close examination, although history is the original model to which Machiavelli constantly refers, we shall frequently find that it only serves to give greater weight to, or furnish the demonstration of those maxims which were, in fact, the fruits of his own experience. And this is the primary source of his chief merits and defects. Having as yet no accurate vision of the process, by which an ever different present results from the past; being as yet too uncertain of his method to deduce with scientific precision general principles from concrete facts, he placed antiquity between the two, and antiquity proved to be an artificial link, whenever it was only called upon to demonstrate foregone conclusions. Nevertheless this first attempt shows us plainly, that Machiavelli used it—one may say as a ladder—in order to climb to a higher world far above the wearying routine of daily labour amidst a policy of petty subterfuge. Urged on by genius, great powers of analysis, and a restless fancy, he attempted to create a new science, not without occasionally falling into exaggerations, which never entirely disappeared from his works, and which later brought upon him the blame of Guicciardini, who accused him of over-preference "for extraordinary deeds and ways."

This is the manner in which his discourse opens: "Lucius Furius Camillus entered the Senate, after having conquered the rebellious peoples of Latium, and said—'I have done all that war can do; now it is your concern, O Conscript Fathers, to assure your future safety as regards the rebels' And the Senate generously pardoned the rebels, excepting only the cities of Veliterno and Anzio The first was demolished, and its inhabitants sent to Rome; the second, after its ships had been destroyed, and it had been forbidden to build others, was colonized by new and loyal inhabitants. This was because the Romans knew that half measures were to be avoided, and that peoples must either be conquered by kindness or reduced to impotence" "I have heard that history is the teacher of our actions, and especially of our rulers;[1] the world has always been inhabited by men with the same passions as our own, and there have always been rulers and

[1] That is—Statesmen.

ing Soderini to hasten at all events to send to Florence, before the departure of the French, all such Aretini, "as may seem to you likely; either by their brains, courage, pugnacity, or wealth, to draw other men after them, and it were better rather to send twenty too many than one too few, without troubling yourself as to their number, or about leaving the town empty."[1] He quitted his post again on the 11th and 17th September to make two journeys to Arezzo, in order to look into the state of things, and provide for the departure of the French, who had now decided on going away.[2]

Fortunately everything turned out fairly well, and Machiavelli, having long begun to think seriously on political matters, not from the official point of view, but from that of a student and man of science, in whose mind particular facts were marshalled according to general principles and rules, composed, after his Arezzo experiences, a short treatise entitled: "Del modo di trattare i popoli della Val di Chiana ribellati."[3]

The author is supposed to pronounce this discourse before the magistrates of the Republic, but it is not one of those compiled in the usual routine of office work: on the contrary, it was a first attempt to soar above his daily work to the highest scientific level. And in this treatise we can already perceive the germs of all the signal merits and defects, which we shall see displayed later in the secretary's principal writings. That which first arrests our attention is the singular manner in which we find, grafted the one upon the other in the author's mind, experience of actual facts, judgments formed of the actions of men personally known to him—among whom Cæsar Borgia is not the last—together with an extraordinary admiration for Roman antiquity, which seems to have been the only link of connection between the results of his daily observations and the general principles of his, as yet, uncertain science. By comparing, he says, that which happens under our own eyes with that which in similar circumstances occurred in Rome, we may succeed in understanding what we should do, since, in point of fact, men are always the same, and have the same passions; thus when circumstances are identical, the same causes lead to the same effects, and therefore the same facts ought to suggest the same rules of con-

[1] Letter of the 8th of September, written *nomine Priorum*, *loc. cit.*, at sheet 116. A similar letter in the name of the Ten is in the "Scritti Inediti," pp. 28 and 29

[2] See in Machiavelli, "Opere," vol vi. pp. 182–84, several letters referring to these journeys.

[3] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 385.

ferently notwithstanding its great importance. Therefore, according to one of Savonarola's old suggestions, a *ruota* was instituted of five doctors of the law, each of whom presided in turn for six months, and filled for that period the place of the Podestà. The Ruota had to sit in judgment on civil and criminal suits, and by a provision of the 15th of April, 1502, was instituted for three years only, a term that was afterwards extended.[1] By another of the 21st of April, the Court of Commerce was remodelled, and compelled to restrict its operations to commercial affairs only.[2] But similar alterations, as may easily be understood, brought no improvement to the general course of affairs under a government, the primary cause of whose weakness lay in changing the Gonfaloniere and the Signoria every two months[3] Thus no traditions of office were formed; no State secrets were possible; all was carried on in public, and only the head chancellor or secretary, Marcello Virgilio, managed, in virtue of his own zeal and influence, to maintain a certain degree of uniformity in the conduct of affairs[4] All measures were slow and uncertain; money was squandered; the citizens, weighed down by excessive taxation, were full of discontent, and had no one to appeal to, since the magistrates disappeared from the stage almost as soon as they had taken office. At last necessary grants of money ceased to be voted, the soldiery received no pay, and influential citizens refused to accept embassies or other high offices, which were consequently bestowed on obscure and insignificant men, who—as Guicciardini phrased it—"had more tongue than presence," and were merely chosen because they pushed themselves forward[5]

For these reasons it was proposed to make some radical change in the form of government. The first idea was to create a Senate for life, like the Pregadi of Venice, but it was feared that this might throw the State into the hands of a few individuals; then it was proposed instead to create a Gonfaloniere for life like the Doge,[6] and on the 26th of August, 1502, that measure was carried.[7] The legal position of the new Gonfaloniere differed

[1] "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," reg 194, at sheet 1. Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," pp 250–51; Giovanni Cambi, "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani," vol. xxi p. 172. [2] Ibid, reg. 194, at sheet 11.

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap. xxv.

[4] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. p 276. He makes no mention of Machiavelli.

[5] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxiv., at pp. 257-58, and chap. xxv. p 274. [6] Ibid, chap xxv. p 278.

[7] This provision ("Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," reg. 194, at sheet 150) has

ruled, and good subjects and bad subjects, and those who rebel and are punished." "One can therefore approve your general course of conduct towards the inhabitants of the Val di Chiana; but not your particular conduct towards the Aretini, who have always been rebellious, and whom you have neither known how to win by kindness nor utterly subdue, after the manner of the Romans. In fact, you have not benefited the Aretini, but on the contrary have harassed them by summoning them to Florence, stripping them of honours, selling their possessions; neither are you in safety from them, for you have left their walls standing, and allowed five-sixths of the inhabitants to remain in the city, without sending others to keep them in subjection. And thus Arezzo will ever be ready to break into fresh rebellion, which is a thing of no slight importance, with Cæsar Borgia at hand, seeking to form a strong state by getting Tuscany itself into his power. And the Borgia neither use half measures nor halt half way in their undertakings. Cardinal Soderini, who knows them well, has often told me that, among other qualities of greatness possessed by the Pope and the Pope's son, they likewise have that of knowing how to seize and profit by opportunities, the which is well confirmed by our experience of what they have already done." At this point the unfinished discourse suddenly breaks off.

Machiavelli who had shown so much zeal in prosecuting the business of the capture and condemnation of Vitelli, and, on the 8th of September, had written to the Florentine commissaries that in order to clear Arezzo of dangerous men, they should rather send twenty too many than one too few, without caring if the city were even depopulated, had no need to demonstrate that he disapproved of half measures in politics, trusted solely to prompt and resolute conduct, and was by no means satisfied with the perpetual petty tergiversation of his fellow citizens. But neither must we believe that in these theoretical discourses he intended positively to condemn the conduct of the magistrates. They naturally had to consider the passions and character of the men over whom they ruled; his object in writing was to inquire into what should be the true policy of a people such as he imagined after meditating on the history of Rome

Certainly the affairs of the Republic at this juncture were carried on with a weakness and timidity making all men feel the necessity of some active reform. In the April of this year a new law had been passed for the abolishment of the Podestà and the Captain of the people, ancient offices which had originally been political and judicial posts; but having long lost the former of their attributes, now fulfilled the second very indif-

family, was a good friend of the people and the Liberal Government. Likewise he was a facile speaker, a good citizen, and had none of the large energies or lofty gifts exciting too much hatred or too much affection, and this was by no means the least cause of his success[1] On the 23rd of the same month Machiavelli despatched to him at Arezzo the official announcement of his election, expressing at the same time the hope that he might succeed in conferring on the Republic that prosperity for the sake of which the new office had been created.[2] This election was a very notable event, not only in the history of Florence, but also in the life of Machiavelli; for he was an old acquaintance of the Soderini family, and speedily gained the full confidence of the new Gonfaloniere, who entrusted him, as we shall see, with very important State affairs.

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p 200; Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 64.

[2] Florence Archives, class x dist. 3, No. 101, at sheet 134. The letter was not written by Machiavelli, only corrected by him.



little from what it had formerly been; he was at the head of the Signoria and nothing more. But at all its sittings, he had the right of initiative in proposing laws; also that of taking part in and voting with the judges in criminal trials, which was in itself an increase of power. Then the fact of being elected for life, among political magistrates with so brief a tenure of authority, greatly increased both his influence and his strength. It was necessary that he should be at least fifty years of age, and should hold no other office; his brothers, sons, and nephews were excluded from the Signoria, and both himself and his sons were forbidden to trade. His salary was 1,200 florins a year. The number of eligible candidates was large, even the citizens belonging to the lesser trades being admissible. The election was to be made by the Great Council, for, on that day, all who had a right to sit there were to have the power to vote. Every counsellor was called upon to give the name of the citizen whom he wished to elect, and all those obtaining half the votes *plus* one, were again balloted thrice. At the third time whoever obtained the majority, among those having more than half the whole number of votes, was the successful candidate. The Signory, the Colleges, the Ten, the Captains of the Guelph party, and the Right in conjunction could deprive him of office by a majority of three-fourths, in the event of his violating the law.[1] This provision, twice discussed by the Eighty and twice by the Great Council, was finally carried—after a hard struggle—by sixty-eight votes against thirty-one in the Council of Eighty, and by eight hundred and eighteen against three hundred and seventy-two in the Great Council.

On the the 20th of September, Piero Soderini, the Bishop's brother, was elected Gonfaloniere by a large majority. He had already officiated as Gonfalôniere eighteen months before, had filled many other posts, and although of ancient and wealthy

been published by L Banchi, Director of the Siennese Archives, in a "Raccolta di scritture varie," made for the Riccomanni-Fineschi marriage. Turin, Vercellino, 1865. See also the documents published by Razzi in his "Vita di Piero Soderini," Padua, 1737.

[1] Guicciardini ("Storia Fiorentina," pp 280–82) gives a very minute and exact report of the Provvisioni. Careful comparison with the original documents enables us to see the marvellous accuracy of Guicciardini on this subject, as indeed on all others, in his "Storia Fiorentina." Frequently he gives *verbatim* the laws and documents which he has occasion to mention. This proves that the illustrious historian Ranke was mistaken in his over severe judgment respecting the studies, acquirements, and historic fidelity of Guicciardini. However it is true that when the illustrious German expressed that opinion in his "Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber" (Berlin, 1824), he could not have read Guicciardini's "Opere Inedite," which, even in Italy, exhibited him in an entirely new light.

life entered into a quieter and more decorous phase, for she now had to deal with a husband capable of sending her out of the world with little hesitation after the Borgia's favourite style. For this reason, although some of her actions were in accordance with her past career, they have always been enveloped in the deepest mystery.[1] She surrounded herself with *litterati* who flattered her, even applied herself to works of piety and charity, thus gaining the improved reputation that she ever after enjoyed, and almost complete exculpation at the hands of many writers.

But in Rome with the Pope, and in Romagna with the Duke of Valentinois, the scene only shifted from one tragedy to another, from bloodshed to more bloodshed. Insulting pamphlets, atrocious epigrams, were continually appearing in the Eternal City; but the Pope was too full of other matters to pay any attention to them. From time to time, some cardinal, after accumulating great riches, would fall ill and die suddenly, or be unexpectedly impeached and sentenced to confinement in the castle of St. Angelo, from which he never issued alive. All his possessions—plate, money, even furniture and tapestry—speedily found their way to the Vatican. His vacant benefices were conferred upon other prelates, often destined to come to the same end as soon as they were rich enough. "Our Lord," wrote the Venetian ambassador, "generally fattens them up, before feasting on them." And, in the July of that year, this was the fate of the Datario, Battista Ferrari, cardinal of Modena, who had been his most faithful instrument in squeezing money from everybody and everything. Having amassed great riches he was suddenly seized with a mortal sickness; the Pope gave him spiritual assistance at the last hour, and then, as usual, stripped his palace and took all his property. The greater part of his benefices were conferred upon Sebastiano Pinzon who had been his private secretary, and, as it was generally rumoured, had poisoned his master by the Holy Father's own command.[2]

The city was illuminated during these days; the Governor of Rome and the Pope's guards, followed by a great crowd, went about the streets shouting—*The Duke, the Duke.*[3] Cæsar Borgia had entered Camerino and captured its Lord, Giulio Cesare da Varano, and his sons. The Pope therefore was so excited with joy,

[1] Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia"

[2] And it is publicly said that he had them *in premium sanguinis*, "since by many evident signs all hold that the cardinal died *ex veneno*, and that this Sebastian was the murderer. . . . The pope has received him *inter familiares*." Antonio Giustinian, "Dispacci". Despatch of the 20th July, 1502.

[3] Despatch of the 24th of July, 1502.



CHAPTER V.

Legation to the Duke of Valentinois in Romagna—The doings of the Pope in Rome at the same period—Machiavelli composes his "Descrizione" of events in Romagna.

(1502–1503.)



NCE more it is the turn of the Borgia to claim the attention of all Italy. Lucrezia had now, to her own advantage, disappeared from the Roman stage, after having been the chief personage of the most scandalous and nefarious tales. But she seemed heedless of reproach, since she was often to be seen with her father and brother merrily taking part in masquerades and balls which were nothing better than orgies too indecent for description.[1] At last, in the January of 1502, she set out for Ferrara with an immense suite, and travelling with an excessive pomp and luxury of which contemporary chroniclers give minute and tedious accounts repeated *ad nauseam*. In Ferrara she became the bride of Duke Alfonso d'Este, and splendid festivities were held there during many days.[2] But from that time her

[1] Burchardi and Matarazzo give particulars of them.

[2] Marchioness Isabella Gonzaga, a lady whose elevated mode of thought is strikingly contrasted with the prevailing tone of the times, went to Ferrara to join in these festivities, and wrote to her husband that she found them very wearisome, and that it seemed *a thousand years* before she could return to Mantova, "not only for the sake of coming back to your lordship and my little son, but also to get away from this place where one has no pleasure in life." (Letter of the 5th February, 1502.) "And were they veritable pleasures," she wrote, "they could not satisfy me without the presence of your lordship and our little boy." Isabella Gonzaga was not deceived by the show of official gaiety, for she remarked: "to say the truth this wedding is a very cold one." (Letter of the 3rd of February.) *Vide* the collection of her very interesting letters published by Signor Carlo d'Arco in the "Archivio Storico," Appendix xi.

time the Duke's principal captains, who were nearly all of them petty tyrants from central Italy, perceived how he was destroying one by one all their companions, and understood that before long their own turn would come. And, on learning that he had already resolved to take possession of Perugia and Castello, and then fall upon the Orsini, they all met together "in order not to be devoured by the dragon one after another," [1] and decided to raise the standard of rebellion against the Duke and seize the present opportunity for attacking him, now that he was deserted by France. The first result of this agreement was, that on the 8th of October some of the conspirators carried by surprise the fortress of San Leo in the Duchy of Urbino, the which made an extraordinary impression, as the signal and forerunner of fresh events In fact, on the 9th day of October,[2] the conspirators all assembled at La Magione near Perugia, for the formal arrangement of the terms of the league. There were several of the Orsini, namely, the cardinal, the Duke of Gravina, Paolo and Frangiotto, besides Ermes, son of Giovanni Bentivoglio, with full powers as representative of his father, Antonio da Venafio, with full powers from Pandolfo Petrucci, Messer Gentile and Giovan Paolo Baglioni, and Vitellozzo Vitelli who, being ill, was carried in on a couch.[3] They pledged themselves to the common defence, to make no attack without the general consent, and to collect an army of 700 men-at-arms in blank (*in bianco*),[4] 100 light horse, 9,000 foot soldiers, and more if necessary ; and all who should fail to observe these legally stipulated terms, were to be fined 50,000 ducats, and be stigmatized as traitors. Florentine assistance was soon asked, but they took to arms at once, and Paolo Vitelli, having carried the citadel of Urbino by assault on the 15th of October, now stirred the whole Duchy to revolt, so that only a few of the numerous fortresses remained in Borgia's hands.

Cæsar perfectly understood the gravity of this revolt. But without losing his presence of mind, he sent against the enemy the portio of his army still remaining faithful to him, under

[1] This expression is to be found in a letter of the 11th October, written by Giovan Paolo Baglioni, one of the conspirators, to Messer Vincenzo Count of Montevibiano, the last who filled the office of Podestà in Florence. It is included in the correspondence published by Passerini, "Opere" (P.M.), vol. iv. p. 94 and fol.

[2] The date is extracted from the before-quoted letters. Several preparatory meetings had however been previously held, as we learn from the historians and from the documents of Machiavelli's own Legation to Borgia in Romagna.

[3] Letters of Baglioni quoted above.

[4] That is to say, they were bound to engage 700 men, but had not already got them in readiness. As we shall see, Cæsar Borgia mocked this expression of theirs.

as to be unable to keep it concealed. Having called a Consistory to announce a victory of the Hungarians over the Turks, he spoke only of Camerino and the Duke. Reminded by the cardinal of Santa Prassede of the object of the meeting, he at once ordered the letter to be fetched; but then, pursuing his other subject, forgot to have it read.[1] While speaking with the Venetian and Spanish ambassadors, he walked about the room too restless to sit still; had the Duke's letter read, which after relating all that occurred concluded as follows: "May this do good to your Holiness;" and then exalted the Duke's prudence and magnanimity, "praising him *ab omni parte*."[2] He predicted his son's future conquests, and in his mind's eye already beheld him master of all central Italy. He was however uncertain of what might be the attitude of Venice with regard to changes so rapid. Therefore calling to him the Venetian ambassador, he immediately began to make great protestations of friendship, in order to see how he would reply. But Antonio Giustinian was a wary politician, and wrote to his Doge: "In answer to what I have just related, Principe Serenissimo, *ambulavi super generalissimis* while the Pope went *super generalibus*."[3]

Meanwhile Valentinois had assumed the titles of Cæsar Borgia of France, by the grace of God, Duke of Romagna, Valencia and Urbino, Prince of Andria, Lord of Piombino, Gonfalonier and Captain-General of the Church, and he advanced upon Bologna without delay. But at this moment France put her *veto* upon any farther proceedings, giving it to be understood that she could not permit the Borgia to extend their conquests in Italy: that they must renounce all idea of Bologna and Tuscany.[4] At the same

[1] Despatch of the 29th July. [2] Despatch of the 27th July.
[3] Despatch of the 22nd July, 1502.
[4] The good Isabella Gonzaga wrote to her husband on this subject: It is said that the king of France means to make you march against the Duke, but it seems to me that we must be very cautious, "for now one knows not whom to trust," and soon we might see the King once more in agreement with the Duke. (Letter of the 23rd July, 1502.) She was not mistaken in this. But it was no sympathy for Valentinois that made her express this opinion. For at the time when the people of Faenza were valiantly defending their lord, she had written to her husband: "I am pleased that the Faentini are so faithful and constant in the defence of their lord, for they restore the honour of the Italians. Thus may God grant them grace to persevere, not to wish ill to the Duke of Valentinois, but because neither that lord, nor his faithful people, deserve so heavy a ruin." (Letter of the 20th April, 1501.) And on the 3rd of July of the same year she wrote, that for the anniversary of the battle of Fornuovo she had ordered "that mass should be celebrated for the souls of those valiant men of ours, who lost their lives to save Italy, according to your excellency's prudent and pious advice." Language such as this is very rare, and therefore all the more worthy of note in the age of the Borgia and Lodovico the Moor.

the command of one of his captains, Don Michele Coriglia, a Spaniard of notorious cruelty,[1] and his strangler, better known as Don Michelotto. This man established his quarters in the citadel of Pergola, which still held out for the Duke, making sorties thence into the surrounding territory, and laying it all waste. We are told that it was then that he murdered Giulio da Varano, his wife, and two of his sons, who were in prison, while another of them, after being first tortured at Pesaro, was dragged half dead into a church, and there butchered by a Spanish priest, who was afterwards, in his turn, cut to pieces in a popular riot at Cagli. From Pergola the army went to Fossombrone, where many women, to escape the ferocity of the soldiery, threw themselves and their children into the river.[2]

Meanwhile the rebel army, being now joined by Baglioni and his troops, had increased to 12,000 men, and three miles from Fossombrone, gave battle to Borgia's army, under the joint command of Don Michelotto and Don Ugo di Moncada, another Spaniard. The Duke's forces were utterly routed; Don Ugo was taken prisoner, Don Michelotto barely escaped, and the exultation of the rebels was at its height. The fugitive Guidobaldo di Montefeltro re-entered his dominions, and had a triumphant reception at Urbino; Giovan Maria da Varano, the only survivor of his unhappy family, returned to Camerino. Thus the laborious and sanguinary work of the Borgia seemed all crumbled to dust in one moment. Yet skirmishes on a large scale still went on; Don Michelotto continued to hold out at Pesaro; the Duke was at Imola with a considerable force that he tried to augment. The rebels had asked aid from Venice, who remained a passive spectator; from Florence, who mindful of the doings of the Orsini and Vitelli in Tuscany, and unwilling to go to war with the Borgia, first temporized and then refused outright. The Duke on the other hand applied to the French, who instantly sent him a small body of spearmen under the command of Charles d'Amboise, Lord of Chaumont. This dishonourable action brought about an instant change in the aspect of affairs, and struck terror into Borgia's enemies, who, having neglected to take advan-

[1] A note in the edition of Machiavelli's works (vol vi. p. 485), also repeated in the Passerini and Milanesi edition, styles him a Venetian, and quotes a letter from the commissary in Arezzo, which we have searched for in vain in the Florence Archives. All other writers call him a Spaniard, and when he was engaged by the Florentines as Captain of the Guard the decree of the 27th of February, 1507, runs as follow: "Dicti Domini, they decided, &c., that Michele Coriglia, *the Spaniard*, should be engaged as Captain . . . ." Cl. viii dist. 2, No. 70 ("Deliberazioni dei ix d'ordinanza"), at sheet 9*t*.

[2] Ugolini, "Storia dei Conti e Duchi d'Urbino," vol. ii. p. 98 and fol.

testations of friendship, and assure him that the Republic had positively refused all assistance to the conspirators, who had already applied for it. "And on this head you can enlarge as may seem best to you; but if His Excellency should question you upon other points, you will defer answering till after communicating with us and receiving our reply." He was also charged to ask a safe-conduct for Florentine merchants, having to pass through the Duke's dominions, on their way to and from the East, and told to strongly urge that request, since "the matter was of vital importance to the city."[1] All will understand how weighty an undertaking it must have been for the modest Florentine secretary to bandy words with a man like Cæsar Borgia, who used few words, desired less, and was at this moment thirsting for revenge. Yet it was this mission, so unwillingly accepted by Machiavelli, that first showed the extent of his genius as a political writer.

Still unversed in practical affairs, and by nature and temperament more inclined to thoughtful scrutiny than to action, he now had to face a man who acted without speaking; one who never discussed a point, but signified his ideas by a gesture or movement, indicating that his resolution was already taken or carried out. While conscious that, intellectually, he was the Duke's superior, he acknowledged himself inferior as a man of action, and saw the small use, amid the clash of warring passions and the realities of life, of subtle pondering and lengthened reflection. All this tended to increase in him that admiration of which the first signs were displayed during his journey to Urbino with Cardinal Soderini. Borgia, as we have already noted, was neither a great statesman nor a great captain, but a species of brigand-chief, whose strength principally lay in the support of France and the Vatican He had had, however, the ability to create a State out of nothing, intimidating all men, including the Pope himself; and when taken by surprise by a large number of powerful enemies, had contrived to free himself, and get rid of them by means of boundless audacity and devilish craft. His audacity and craft were the qualities which so many then admired, and Machiavelli even more than the rest. Considering these qualities in themselves, and scruples apart, the question with him was: what might they not achieve could they only be directed towards a different

[1] "Tal cosa è lo stomaco di questa città. Commisione a Niccolò Machiavelli, deliberato a di 5 Ottobre 1502: Opere," vol. vi p. 185 It is made out in the name of the Signoria, although Machiavelli carried on his correspondence with the Ten by whom he was sent.

a separation.[1] In reality we know very little of this undoubtedly important event in Machiavelli's private life. But we know that all that has been written to the injury of this poor Marietta, asserting that her husband made allusion to her in his famous story "Belphagor," has not a shadow of foundation. On the contrary, a few of her letters and others written to Machiavelli by friends, prove her to have been an affectionate wife and a good mother[2] Nevertheless it is certain that Machiavelli seldom spoke of his wife, nor does he appear to have often written to her, generally contenting himself with sending messages by others Neither did his marriage put a stop to his dissipated mode of life, concerning which he spoke freely and wrote jestingly to many, among others to his friend Buonaccorsi, through whom he received news of Marietta and sent her his own. Without attempting to endow him with an ideal delicacy of feeling, which was certainly unknown to him, nothing justifies us in concluding that he felt no affection for his wife and family We see instead in his conduct and mode of conversation the results of the scant respect, if not positive contempt for women that began in Italy on the decay of national morality, and of the cynicism with regard to manners, introduced among us by men of learning, that was habitual even among the best and most affectionate of men. For instance, by all that we know of Buonaccorsi, he must have had an excellent character in every respect; yet his letters to Machiavelli are noteworthy proofs of what we have just stated, and in preparing them for the press it is often necessary to expunge many words and even entire sentences, to avoid arousing the disgust of the modern reader.

However this may be, Machiavelli, unable to decline the proffered mission, and with every reason to hope that his absence would be short, made his wife believe that it would be still shorter, and set about his preparations for the journey.

On the 4th of October the safe-conduct was signed, and on the following day the commission. This instructed him to start without delay to present himself to the Duke, to make large pro-

[1] We are unable to determine the precise date of the marriage; but it certainly took place in the year 1502. In 1503 a son was born to him as we learn from several of Buonaccorsi's letters. Buonaccorsi, who never before mentioned Marietta, speaks of her, as we shall see, during Machiavelli's mission to Valentinois, in a way that leaves no doubt of her being already married. On the 27th of October, 1502, the Florentine ambassadors in France make allusion, in a letter to Machiavelli, which we shall quote later, to his having left his wife alone in Florence.

[2] The first to prove this by authentic documents was Signor Inocenzio Giampieri, in an article upon Machiavelli, published in the "Monumenti del Giardino Puccini: ' Pistoia, Cino, 1846.

but they were fools for their pains, because the Pope being alive, and the King of France in Italy, "the ground was burning under their feet, and it needed more water to put it out than such men as those could throw." The conclusion of the whole discourse was, that this was the moment for the Florentines to conclude a firm alliance with him. If they waited till he had "patched up matters with the Orsini," there would be as many difficulties and hesitations as before They must declare themselves and come at once to terms. Machiavelli was obliged to answer that he must write to Florence, which so much vexed the Duke, that he would add nothing more, when pressed to say something definite, as to what kind of agreement he wished, &c. "And notwithstanding that I pressed him, to extract something definite, he always kept wide of the point."[1] On the 9th, the day on which the rebels signed their league at La Magione, the Duke summoned Machiavelli, and showed him so much courtesy, that the latter wrote that he knew not how to describe it. He made him listen to some favourable letters from France, showing him their well-known signature, and again insisted on the necessity of a speedy agreement. "One can plainly see," concluded Machiavelli, after giving many details, "that the Duke is now ready for any bargain; but it would be advisable to send an ambassador empowered to offer definite terms."[2] The secretary and agents of the Duke all repeated the same things, pressing him on every side. Then came the news of the defeat of Don Ugo and Don Micheletto by the Orsini and Vitelli, and Machiavelli had the greatest difficulty to learn the particulars, "for at this Court all is arranged with admirable secrecy, and matters that are to be hidden are never alluded to" With his usual impenetrability the Duke affected the utmost contempt for his adversaries and the number of men-at-arms which they pretended to have, saying that it was well to call them "men-at-arms in blank, which means in nothing." Among the rest Vitellozzo had never been seen to do anything "beseeming a man of courage, always excusing himself on account of having the French sickness. He is fit for nought else than pillaging defenceless places, robbing those who run away from him, and committing treachery such as this." And the Duke enlarged a good deal on this subject, speaking quite gently without any show of anger.[3] In these days danger had made him more tractable, and Machiavelli was able to obtain the safe-conduct

at La Magione was held on the 9th. This, as we have said, proves that others had been held before.

[1] Letter of the 7th October, 1502.

[2] Ibid.

[3] First letter of the 20th October.

and nobler purpose? And in this way his imagination began to take fire.

The Duke, on the other hand, finding himself confronted by a man trained in learning and in the office work of the Florence Chancery, was conscious of his own practical superiority, and plainly showed this consciousness in his conversation. The man, however, was Niccolò Machiavelli, whose keen vision pierced far beneath the surface of things, and who, if sometimes deficient in the instinct suggesting quick repartee and immediate action, had an incomparable power of analysing the actions of others after the event. He had neither ability nor inclination to take part in what happened before his eyes; but now for the first time his mind began to formulate with clearness and precision the idea of giving to politics an assured and scientific basis, treating them as having a proper and distinct value of their own, entirely apart from their moral worth; as the art, in short, of finding the means to the end, whatever that end might be. And although the Republic he served was by no means overburdened with moral scruples, in Cæsar Borgia he first beheld the personification of this art, living and breathing before his eyes; he therefore chose him for its representative type, and at last came to admire him almost as a creation of his own intellect But we shall recur to this subject later on.

Meanwhile Machiavelli began his journey upon horseback, and reaching Scarperia travelled on by post to Imola, where he arrived on the 7th October; and at the eighteenth hour of the day presented himself to the Duke without even changing his clothes, "*cavalchereccio*"—horseman like as he was—to make use of his own expression. At that period the rebellion had barely commenced, and the gravity of it was not yet understood. The Duke listened without reply to the protestations of friendship offered by Machiavelli in the name of the Republic, evidently receiving them as conventional forms of speech. Then he said that he desired to confide to the envoy secrets which he had told to no living man; and began to relate how the Orsini had at one time supplicated him, almost on their knees, to proceed to attack Florence, and how he had always refused his consent. He had had no hand in their expedition on Arezzo, but had not regretted it, since the Florentines had broken faith with him. However, on the receipt of missives from France and the Pope, he had been obliged to order them to withdraw. Hence the rancours leading them (the Orsini) to this "Diet of bankrupts;"[1]

[1] The letter is dated 7th October: "Opere," vol. i. p. 188. The final Diet

and a league for offence and defence between the Duke and the rebels, with the obligation of reducing Urbino and Camerino to obedience. The Duke promised to continue the previous stipends to the Orsini and Vitelli, without obliging both to be in camp at the same time, and the cardinal was only to stay in Rome when it pleased him to be there. As to Bentivoglio, he was left out of the agreement, since, being under French protection, the Borgia dared not break any pledges made to him. The mutual distrust with which both parties drew up terms was so plainly evident, that it is hard to understand how the Orsini and Vitelli could let themselves be so miserably entrapped, unless indeed they were frightened by the Duke's French reinforcements, while want of money made it impossible for them to continue to struggle against a powerful foe with France and the Pope at his back. They hoped to gain time in order to begin over again; but the Duke was on the alert, and in spite of being surrounded by many enemies, it was easy for him to lop off some, and thus weaken the rest—a course impossible for his foes who had only a single individual to contend with.[1]

Very graphically and regularly Machiavelli described the march of all these events to the Ten, and when on the 11th of November those magistrates complained of having had no letters from him for eight days,[2] he answered: "Your excellencies must hold me excused, remembering that matters cannot be guessed, and that we have to do with a prince who governs for himself, and that he who would not write dreams and vagaries, has to make sure of things, and in making sure of them time goes, and I try to use time and not throw it away."[3] In fact, he threw into the observation of the drama then unrolled before his eyes, all the ardour of one seeking for truth in a scientific spirit and method. At times he seemed to be an anatomist dissecting a corpse, and feeling sure of discovering in it the germ of an unknown disease. He had an unequalled gift of faithful and graphic narrative, and his style attains to a vigour and originality, of which modern prose had

[1] Thus wrote Machiavelli in his letter of the 13th November, and in that of the 20th he related how he had said to the Duke, that for that reason he had always judged that he (the Duke) would be victorious, and that had he written what he thought from the first, he should have proved himself a prophet. Later he built up a theory upon this observation, giving it as a general rule, that one who is surrounded by many enemies, can easily weaken and conquer them exactly because he can divide them, which is not possible for his adversaries

[2] Letter of the Ten, signed by Marcello, dated 11th November, 1502. See "Opere" (P.M), vol iv p 168. Buonaccorsi repeated the same complaint in his letters

[3] Letter of the 13th November.

for the Florentine merchants, which he instantly forwarded to the Ten,[1] to whom he was continually sending all the intelligence it was possible to collect.

On the 23rd of October he had another long conference with the Duke, who read to him a very encouraging letter from the King of France, adding that the French lances would soon arrive, and also the foreign infantry. Then he spoke with great indignation of the treachery of the Orsini, who were already trying to come to terms with him. "Now," said he, "they are playing the part of friends, and write me kind letters." "To-day Signor Paolo is to come to see me, to-morrow the Cardinal, and thus they think to bamboozle me at their pleasure. But I, on the other hand, am only dallying with them, I listen to everything, and take my own time." He again repeated that the Florentines ought to conclude a strict friendship with him.[2]

All his conversation hinged upon this point, to which as yet the orator could give no reply. And what greatly added to Machiavelli's perplexity was his inability to discover what would be the probable result of the agreement. On the 27th of October, Paolo Orsini, in the disguise of a messenger, came to treat in person, "but what is now the Duke's mind I cannot tell: I do not see how he can pardon this offence, nor how the Orsini can cease to dread him."[3] The Secretary Agapito informed him that nothing was yet concluded, because the Duke wished to add a certain clause to the terms, "that, if accepted, opens him a window, and, if refused, a door by which to escape from these stipulations, at which even babes might laugh."[4] Other agents continued to repeat to him that this was the moment to conclude a friendly alliance with Florence, who ought to give the promised Condotta, without loss of time. "As to the agreement with the rebels it was not even settled, and in any case he need not trouble about it, since *where there are men there are ways of managing them.* A few only of the Orsini will be spared; for as to Vitellozzo, who is the real enemy of Florence, the Duke will not hear a word, knowing him to be a venomous snake, the brand of Tuscany and Italy."

At last the terms of the agreement were concluded, dating from the 28th of October, signed by the Duke and Paolo Orsini, and Machiavelli sent the Ten a secretly obtained copy of them with his despatch of the 10th of November.[5] Peace was sworn,

[1] See the "Legazioni: Opere," vol. vi. p. 225.
[2] Letter of the 23rd October, 1502.
[3] Letter of the 27th October
[4] Letter of the 8th November, 1502.
[5] This agreement is in the "Opere," vol. iv. p. 264.

as yet given no example In these letters we see Machiavelli's political doctrines growing into shape under our eyes, we note his rigourness of method, and also find the greatest eloquence of which he was capable.

Yet, strange to say, he was thoroughly discontented, and daily begged for his recall with increasing insistence. We have already noted some of the motives of this discontent. Naturally restless, he disliked staying long in one place;[1] and on this, as on all his legations, could not pay his way with the scanty sum allowed him by the Republic; and neither wishing to follow the example of those who lived at court at the Duke's expense, nor to compromise the dignity of his position, he was obliged to spend freely and contract debts. His wife, finding herself forsaken almost as soon as married, for her husband, after having promised to come back to her in a week, seldom wrote to her, and left her to struggle through domestic embarrassments, was daily at the Chancery asking news of him, making complaints, and worrying Buonaccorsi and other friends who in their turn continually wrote to him upon the subject.[2]

To these reasons may be added others of even greater importance to him. It was certainly a most troublesome mission to have to temporize with the Duke without the power to settle anything, to find him daily more impatient, and be derisively told by his agents that: "he who waits for time and has it, seeks better bread than wheaten bread."[3] At any rate, matters could only be concluded by an ambassador charged with clear and exact proposals. In his opinion it had been an error to send one to Rome instead of Imola, because it was the Duke that was to be satisfied by the agreement, not the Pope, who could never undo what was done by the Duke, whereas the contrary might easily occur.[4] But

[1] In a letter of the 18th November, Buonaccorsi tells him: "Having so much firmness, that you cannot keep in the same mind for an hour." "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii, No. 16. Ser Agostino Vespucci da Terranuova wrote to him on the 14th of October: "Vides igitur quo nos inducat animus iste tuus equitandi, evagandi ac cursitandi tam avidus." Idem, cassetta iii., No 38.

[2] On the 18th October, 1502, Buonaccorsi wrote to him at Imola, that Marietta asked about him and complained of his remaining absent so long when he had promised to come back to her in a week. She would not write to him herself, "and she does thousands of mad things, . . . so in the devil's name pray come back" "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii. No. 5. And in another of the 21st December, 1502, he says to him: "Monna Marietta blasphemes God, and thinks that she has thrown away both herself and her property. For goodness' sake give orders that she may have her own dower, like others of her position, otherwise she will lose all patience with you. . . . I now sit in your place at certain little suppers given by the Ten. . . . &c." Idem, case iii. No. 17.

[3] Letter of the 13th November, 1502.

[4] Letter of the 14th December. On the 27th June, 1502, Bishop Soderini had

the gentleness of his disposition made all contact with evil most repugnant to him. Frequently, during this legation, expressions fell from his pen, betraying a certain agonized terror beneath a veil of cynicism. Then, to banish the memory of horrible sights, he wrote ribald and facetious letters to his official colleagues, which made them burst with laughter,[1] as they told him in their replies, and, in their turn, they related to him all the gossip and scandal of the Chancery—where, in his absence, there was always great disorder—or else their own excesses and indecencies

At other times, weary of such themes, he withdrew to meditate on the writers of antiquity. We find him writing to Buonaccorsi with feverish insistence for "Plutarch's Lives," and he was continually applying to this kind and obliging friend for books, money, and help of all kinds. In a letter of the 21st of October, Buonaccorsi wrote to him: "We have been searching for 'Plutarch's Lives,' but it is not to be bought in Florence. Have patience, for we must write to Venice for it; and to tell you the truth, you are a worry to ask for so many things."[2] A strange spectacle to see Machiavelli, while divided between contemplation of the heroes of Plutarch and of the deeds of Valentinois, beginning to create a science of politics founded on the history of the past and experience of the present. Scholastic writers had sought the first origin and basis of human society, starting from the conception of God and the Supreme Good, and digressing into reflections having no weight on the practical affairs of life. Even Dante had been unable in his "Monarchia" to free himself from theories that were too abstract and artificial. For similar theories Machiavelli had neither time, opportunity, nor liking. Face to face with the realities of life, he investigated the ruling laws of human actions, in order to formulate useful precepts for the government of men. He sought to know the sources from which the statesman derives his strength, and how that strength should be employed to attain the desired end.

Meanwhile it became increasingly difficult to obtain audience of

[1] A letter of Bartolommeo Ruffini, dated the 23rd October, 1502, said: "Your letters to Biagio and the others are most grateful to all, and the jests and merry [illegible] contained in them make all crack their jaws with laughter. Your wife desires you, and often sends here to ask of you and of your return."

[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii No. 6. His affection for Machiavelli was so great, that on the 18th of October 1502, after writing to him concerning it, he added: "For the which I do not desire you to be grateful, since even if I wished not to love you and be all yours, I could not help myself, being as it were forced by nature to love you." Idem, case iii. No. 5.

since it was necessary to have some one at the Duke's court, and none fitter than himself could be found.[1] At the same time the Gonfalonier and the Ten sent him twenty-five gold ducats and sixteen *braccia* (eleven yards) of damask, the first towards his own expenses, the cloth to be given away in presents.[2]

And there is still another reason to be added to those already mentioned. It is true that Machiavelli found the amplest materials for study in observing the actions of Valentinois and those around him;[3] it is true that he regarded politics as abstract from morality; equally true that he was troubled by few scruples of conscience where State affairs were concerned; yet notwithstanding all this it was intolerable to one of his disposition, to be continually involved in so dense a tangle of infamy; to live among men steeped in crime, ever ready for treachery and bloodshed, amenable to nothing but brute force, without having the slightest power to prevent or modify their misdeeds. No opinion can be more erroneous than that held by those supposing that the actions of Valentinois at this period were counselled and directed by Machiavelli.[4] On the contrary, all his letters tend to prove the great difficulty he experienced in discovering the intentions and secret designs of the Duke, and how often he failed in this being kept altogether in the dark. The Duke did not heed the advice of the Florentine secretary, whom he sometimes seemed almost to ridicule. Machiavelli was neither bloodthirsty nor cruel, indeed

[1] M. Virgilio's letter is dated 7th of November, 1502, and is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii. No. 32. In it he says that he gives him this now very unwillingly, for, "I find myself with my own affairs, thine, and thy lectures all on my hands at once." Which is a proof of what we have elsewhere remarked, that the First Secretary still continued to teach at the University.

[2] The letter of the Gonfaloniere Soderini, written on the 21st December, is also included among the "Carte del Machiavelli," and was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iv p. 243. See too the letters of the Ten published in the same volume, at pp. 239–41.

[3] On the 27th October, 1502, the Florentine ambassadors in France, Luigi Della Stufa and Ugolino Martelli, wrote to him: "We should have some compassion on you, who, like ourselves, have had to leave your wife and your home, were it not that you must have been already wearied out by the grave nature of your business in Florence, and that you must willingly relax your mind and repose your body; that change of air and seeing other faces, especially when of such a sort, generally sharpens the wits; and therefore we congratulate you, and we pray you, when you have time, to write us some news." "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iv. pp. 132–34.

[4] Passerini, in his notes to Ademollo's romance Marietta dei Ricci, said outright, that Machiavelli believing to have found in Borgia "the fitting instrument to carry out his cherished idea of the liberty and union of Italy, *instigated him to his famous treachery at Sinigaglia.*" (Note 10 to chap. iv.) He repeats this in the "Opere" (P. M.). This opinion, maintained before and after, by other writers also, found in Gervinus one of its first and most energetic opponents.

the Duke, who always harped on the necessity of concluding an alliance, confirming the already stipulated *Condotta*, and, whenever forced to listen to fresh protestations of friendship, without any definite proposals, broke out indignantly : " *Ecco !* nothing can be settled" with these Florentines ![1] Yet from time to time he summoned Machiavelli, and under colour of making fresh confidences, tried to see how the land lay. One day he told him that in past times Giovan Paolo Baglioni had begged for a letter empowering him to follow Vitellozzo and assist him in the restoration of the Medici in Florence, and that he had written the letter. "Now I know not," he continued, looking at Machiavelli, "whether he may have boasted of this to lay the blame at my door." And the Secretary replied that he had heard nothing of the matter.[2] Another day he confided to him with much gravity how Paolo Orsini declared that the Florentines had just offered him a *Condotta* for the army before Pisa, and that he had refused it. Thereupon Machiavelli asked whether Orsini had given the name of the person bearing the offer, or had shown the letters, and if he was in the habit of telling lies. The Duke, perceiving that the secretary would not fall into the trap, replied that Orsini had neither mentioned names, nor shown letters ; but had told plenty of lies. "And thus this matter passed off in laughter, although at first he had spoken of it with disquiet, pretending to believe it and be vexed by it."[3] He then spoke of a secret agreement made by the Venetians in Rimini, by means of a compatriot who dwelt there, adding that he—the Duke—had caused him to be hung to save their honour." After uttering this warning, as it were by chance, he went on to talk of the conquest of Pisa, remarking that "it would be one of the most glorious any captain could make." "Then he referred to Lucca, saying that it was the richest of States, and a mouthful for a *gourmand.* He afterwards added that if he, Florence and Ferrara were allied, they need be afraid of nothing."[4] It was the old story

[1] Letter of the 20th November.

[2] Letter of the 20th November In a despatch of the 7th August, 1502, Giustinian wrote, that the Pope confessed that he had been dragged into seconding Vitellozzo and the Orsini in the affair of Arezzo. The ambassador, with his usual keenness, drew the conclusion that he spoke in this way, as a measure of precaution, having probably written compromising letters to Orsini and Vitellozzo.

[3] In the despatch of the 13th November, Giustinian writes that the Pope had told him how the Orsini were continually tempting the Florentines with the offer of giving them Pisa, "and these fools believe them ; . . . for to get Pisa they would sell their souls to the devil, would abandon the king of France, ourselves, and all the rest of the world"

[4] First letter of the 6th December.

Guidobaldo had taken flight, his little nephew had accompanied him, but was now again at Sinigaglia with his mother, who governed for her son, aided by the counsels of his guardian, the celebrated Andrea Doria, and was styled the Prefettessa. Doria, perceiving the hasty advance of the Duke's army, and being already confronted by the troops of Vitellozzo and the Orsini, who were disposed to attack the city, first placed in safety the mother and child entrusted to his care, and then ordering his men to defend the citadel to the utmost, hurried in person to Florence.[1]

On the 29th of December, Machiavelli wrote a letter from Pesaro that was lost on the way, giving a very minute narration of what he afterwards summarized in other letters; namely, how Vitellozzo and the Orsini had entered Sinigaglia, and how the Duke on hearing this ordered them to station their men in the suburb outside the walls, and instantly marched his army towards the city, which he entered on the morning of the 31st of December. The first to seek his presence was Vitellozzo, who having resisted reconciliation more stoutly than the others, knew himself to be the most hated. This captain came humbly forward, cap in hand, mounted on a mule, and unarmed. He was followed by the Duke of Gravina, Paolo Orsini, Oliverotto da Fermo, and all four accompanied the Duke through the streets of the city, to the house prepared for his reception. The Duke, who had already given the signal to those who were to seize them, made them prisoners as soon as they entered the house, ordered their foot soldiers in the suburb to be stripped and disarmed, and sent half his army to perform the same office on the men-at-arms quartered in the neighbouring castles at six or seven miles from Sinigaglia. And on the same day Machiavelli immediately reported the event, adding: "The sack is still going on, although it is now 23 o'clock" (an hour before sunset). "I am much troubled in my mind; I know not if I can send this letter, having no one to carry it. I will write at length in another; and it is my opinion that they (the prisoners) will not be alive to-morrow morning."[2]

Another letter, much longer and of more importance, written at the same date, was lost. We have, however, that of the 1st of January, 1503, in which he relates how towards one o'clock of the night, he had been summoned by the Duke, "who, with the brightest face in the world, expressed his satisfaction at this triumph, adding wise words and expressions of exceeding affection

[1] Ugolini, "Storia dei Conti e Duchi d'Urbino," vol. ii. pp. 106–115.
[2] Letter of the 31st of December, 1502.

holds of Urbino being either dismantled or still held in Guidobaldo's name, and the impossibility of placing any confidence in the recently concluded agreement, "had already deprived the Duke of half his forces and two-thirds of his reputation."[1] Yet his artillery continued its march as though nothing had happened; 1,000 Swiss had arrived at Faenza, and, between Swiss and Gascons, he had already a force of about 1,500 men. No one could guess the object of his movements; all was mystery, for "this lord never reveals anything excepting when doing it, and he does it under pressure of necessity, on the moment and not otherwise; wherefore I pray your Excellencies to excuse me and not charge me with negligence, when I cannot satisfy your Excellencies with news, for at most times I fail to satisfy even myself."[2] And the mystery was farther increased by a strange circumstance that took place at this time. Messer Rimino or Ramiro, the duke's trusted instrument in Romagna, where he had committed most atrocious cruelties to bring the country into subjection, and excited universal hatred, came from Pesaro to Cesena and, to the astonishment of all, was arrested on the 22nd of December and thrown into a dungeon.[3] Four days later Machiavelli wrote to the Ten: "This morning Messer Rimino has been found cut into two pieces, on the Piazza where he still lies, and all the people have been able to see him; the cause of his death is not well known, excepting that such was the pleasure of the prince, who shows us that he can make and unmake men according to their deserts."[4]

But now things were hurrying to their end; all was in train for the taking of Sinigaglia. From the days of Sixtus IV. this city had belonged to Giovanni Della Rovere, the husband of Giovanna, sister of Guidobaldo d'Urbino, and now, by the death of that nobleman, had passed in 1501 to his son Francesco Maria, a boy of eleven years, whom Alexander VI. had nominated Prefect of Rome, like his father before him. The first time

[1] Giustinian, despatch of the 29th of December, and note to the same.

[2] Letter of the 26th of December, last of those written from Cesena

[3] Letter of the 23rd of December, 1502.

[4] Letter of the 26th of December. In chap. vii of the "Principe," Machiavelli says in allusion to this fact, that the Duke wished to clear himself from the charges of cruelty brought against him on account of Messer Rimino's misdeeds as soon as the latter had freed him of his enemies. See also the "Dispacci" of A. Giustinian, vol. i. p. 293.

In the same letter Machiavelli thanked the Ten for having sent him the twenty-five gold ducats and the black damask of which we have already spoken. And *à propos* to this Buonaccorsi wrote to him on the 22nd of the same month: "You will crib a coat of this cloth, rascal that you are." See the "Opere," note to p. 332 of vol. vi.

Sienna; Machiavelli followed on its track, and it being now the winter season, the soldiery and all following the camp were exposed to many hardships.[1]

Turmoil and disorder everywhere prevailed, and all the petty tyrants of the land fled in dismay on the Duke's approach, as though pursued by a dragon.[2] It can easily be believed that amid so great a confusion few letter-carriers could be found, and still fewer who were trustworthy, and for this reason many of Machiavelli's despatches were lost. On the 4th of January, 1503, he gave notice that the soldiery of the Vitelli and Orsini had managed to escape. Meanwhile the march was continued, and the Baglioni fled from Perugia, which surrendered on the 6th. Their sisters, on reaching the frontier where, in consequence of superior orders, the Florentine commissary, Piero Ardinghelli, had repulsed all the refugees, disguised their young daughters as boys, preferring to trust them to the commissary's compassion, rather than see them fall into the hands of the enemy. And Ardinghelli wrote to the Gonfalonier Soderini on the 19th of January, saying: "Now, I cannot avoid being stirred to pity by the spectacle of so much youth and misfortune. . . . I have preferred to write to your Excellency in person, to know if I may give shelter to these four women, or at least to the two damsels . . . Should this not be contrary to the government's intentions, having a natural compassion for the afflicted, I should be greatly obliged to you."[3] And the request was granted

On the 8th Niccolò Machiavelli wrote from Assisi that all were wondering why no one had yet come from Florence to congratulate the Duke, who repeated that by his after-achievements he had rendered signal service to the Republic, for "it would have cost your Excellencies two hundred thousand ducats to put an end to Vitellozzo and the *Orsini*, and even then you could not have done it so neatly." And meanwhile he pursued his march, always "proceeding with unheard-of good fortune, and more than human energy and hope,"[4] resolved to expel the tyrant Pandolfo Petrucci from Sienna, and, if possible, take him captive, to which end the Pope tried to "lull him to sleep with Briefs," for it was well, said the Duke, "to deceive those who

[1] Letter of the 1st of January, 1503.

[2] "Senti Perugia e Siena ancor la vampa
Dell' Idra, e ciaschedun di quei tiranni
Fuggendo innanzi alla sua furia scampa."
Machiavelli, "Decennale," dec. I.

[3] "Lettere di Piero Ardinghelli," as before quoted.

[4] Letter of the 8th of January, 1503.

towards our Florence. He said that this was the service which he had promised to render you at the fitting moment. And as he had declared that he would offer you his friendship all the more pressingly, the surer he was of himself, so now he kept that promise; then he expounded all the reasons inducing him to desire this friendship, in words which excited my admiration. He also begged me to write to you, that having destroyed his capital enemies, who were also those of Florence and France, and uprooted the tares which threatened to overrun Italy, you should now give him a manifest token of friendship, by sending troops towards Perugia, to arrest the flight of Duke Guidobaldo who had gone in that direction, and to take him prisoner should he enter Tuscany. It has likewise happened that, at ten o'clock last night, the Duke had Vitellozzo and Messer Oliverotto da Fermo both strangled;"[1] "the other two have been left living, in order, as it is thought, to see whether the Pope has seized the Cardinal[*] and the others who were in Rome, and it is surmised that he has seized them; that they may all be cheerfully got rid of at the same time." The citadel had already surrendered; the army had that same day begun its march towards Perugia, before going on to

[1] The letter only states that they were put to death, but it is known that they were strangled, and Machiavelli himself mentions it elsewhere At chap. viii. of the "Principe," he relates that Oliverotto da Fermo, brought up by his uncle, Giovanni Fogliani, and sent to fight under Paolo and then under Vitellozzo Vitelli, had become the chief leader of the latter's troops. Longing to make himself master of Fermo, where many were discontented with his uncle's rule, he first made an agreement with a few of the citizens, and then wrote to his uncle that he wished to come and see him and his native city. He arrived with a hundred horsemen, was, by orders of his uncle, most honourably received; gave a grand dinner to him and the principal men of Fermo, and then had them all put to death.

Niccolò Vitelli had five sons, four of whom died a violent death. The elder, Giovanni, by a cannon shot at the siege of Osimo; the second, Camillo, by a stone at Circello in the kingdom of Naples, in fighting for the French; Paolo was beheaded; Vitellozzo strangled.

Gregorovius in a note to p. 483 of vol. vii of his "Geschichte," &c, remarks, how *à propos* to these murders, Giovio wrote in his "Life of Cæsar Borgia," that "he had assassinated the Orsini by means of a splendid deception; and the King of France had said—according to the orator of Ferrara—that it was 'an action worthy of a Roman.'" The Venetians had disapproved of the deed because of its great cruelty; but the Ferrara orator there had declared that they ought to bend their heads, when he proved to them that the Pope and Duke had been quite right "*etiam* to quarter these men, and utterly root out their family." It is singular too that on this occasion Isabella Gonzaga, with a letter of the 15th of January, 1503, sent the Duke 100 masks from Mantua, and he warmly thanked her for them in a letter of the 1st of February. See documents xliv. and xlv. in the "Lucrezia Borgia" of Gregorovius.

[*] Cardinal Orsini.

threatened to attack the city itself if Petrucci were not immediately expelled, but was appeased when the latter begged to be allowed to depart with a safe-conduct, for the French forbade any attack upon Sienna, and the Pope had summoned him suddenly to Rome. But although he granted Petrucci a safe-conduct and a letter recommending him to the care of the Lucchesi, this did not prevent him from despatching fifty armed men on his track with orders to capture him dead or alive. And truly on this occasion the tyrant of Sienna had a miraculous escape from death. He had left his city on the 28th of January, and accompanied by Giovan Paolo Baglioni taken flight towards Lucca with headlong speed, for although ignorant that he was pursued, no one put any trust in the promises of a Borgia. The assassins were on the point of overtaking him, when they were arrested by the Florentine commissary, who, as the war between Florence and Pisa was still going on, would not allow armed men to rove freely about the field of war. Being ignorant of what had passed, he kept them prisoners till he could receive instructions from Florence. This gave the fugitives time to escape from the poisoned claws of the Duke The latter was now obliged to hurry to Rome where his presence was anxiously desired by the Pope, who felt by no means secure with the Campagna full of armed men hostile to his authority. On the other hand France had again issued a severe prohibition of all farther conquests

While in Romagna and Central Italy we behold the Duke, and have Niccolò Machiavelli to give us so graphic a picture of all that occurred there; in Rome we may look upon the equally tragic reverse of the medal. Here we see the Pope possessed of far less self-control than his son, confronted by Antonio Giustinian, who without having the genius or culture of Machiavelli, had much greater influence, larger experience of the world, and extraordinary knowledge of mankind, and who, as Venetian ambassador, had many means lacking to the Florentine secretary, of penetrating to the root of affairs From the 6th of August he had written to the Doge, that Vitellozzo was "fighting shy" of the Duke, and that he foresaw that both the latter and the Pope were decided to "clip the wings" of the Orsini. When the news of the rebellion arrived, and then that of the defeat of Don Ugo and Don Micheletto, the Pope broke out in expressions of mad rage against the Orsini in Consistory, but immediately afterwards lowered his tone, and showed himself almost humble and downcast. At the first intelligence of French encouragement, his joy was so overpowering that the Cardinals sneered among themselves at the Holy Father's want of self-command [1] Then began the prelimi-

[1] Giustinian, despatches of the 1st, 7th, and 18th of October, 1502.

have been masters of treachery." He did not attempt to take the city, for that was forbidden by France; but he was determined to get rid of Pandolfo, who had been "the brain" of the conspiracy.[1]

On the 13th of January they were at Castello della Pieve, and as the new Florentine ambassador, Jacopo Salviati, was at last on the point of arriving, Machiavelli prepared for his own departure, which occurred in fact on the 20th. First, by way of replacing the many letters which had been lost, he wrote one containing a summary of all the events that had happened, but unfortunately the first sheet is all remaining to us of it. In this, with great zeal and care, he begins to give a general sketch of the expedition which, in his opening lines, he pronounces truly "rare and memorable." He does not attribute any premeditated treachery to the Duke, but rather a stern resolve on speedy revenge, when aware that his captains meant to betray him on account of the departure of the French lances. He describes the exceeding caution shown by him in concealing from the Orsini and Vitelli the amount of the forces still at his disposal, making them pass for fewer than they were. And with equal admiration, Machiavelli minutely describes the orders given for dividing the whole army into small corps, and then marching them altogether upon Sinigaglia, so as to arrive there unexpectedly with an overwhelming force, while the enemy's troops were dispersed at a distance from the city, and could not disobey him, without prematurely revealing their treachery. But just as we are at the point of the entry into Sinigaglia we come to the end of this fragment,[2] in which the writer, while endeavouring to remain faithful to historic truth, seems almost to have persuaded himself that he was depicting a hero; indeed some reproofs to that effect had already reached him from Florence, as we learn by Buonaccorsi's letters.[3]

Machiavelli was still at Castello della Pieve on the 18th of January, when the Duke, having received the long-expected news that the Pope had imprisoned Cardinal Orsini and the others in Rome, strangled Paolo and the Duke of Gravina Orsini, whom he had brought with him under strong escort from Sinigaglia. The Duke then continued to lay waste the Siennese territory, and

[1] Letter of the 10th of January.

[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," case 1, No. 19, autograph. This fragment was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iv. p. 254 Passerini asserts that it was written on the 31st of December, 1502; but it mentions the arrival of the new ambassador, who was still being waited for on the 13th of January, 1503.

[3] Buonaccorsi often tells him that he is accused of too much admiration for Valentinois.

should have delivered the land into the hands of foreigners who had their mouths open to swallow it. "So far our only safety has lain in the jealousy between France and Spain, otherwise we should already be ruined. But do not fancy that you (Venetians) are the children of the white goose (privileged people). Your turn would have come also. We are old, and must think of our posterity, wherefore our only hope is in your *Serenissima Republica*, which is everlasting. For the love of God, let us unite together to provide for the salvation of Italy. Do you know what is said of you? That you try to be over wise. Be content with being wise enough. And in saying these things (adds the ambassador) his breast seemed as though it would burst, and as though the words came from his heart instead of his mouth."[1] But who could put faith in the Borgia? Therefore he said very few words in reply to the Pope; "and *solum* I thanked his Holiness for his good intentions towards your Most Excellent Lordship." Besides even Venice was not capable at that period of pursuing a really national policy, nor of profiting by the just notions, such as were now in his own interest and for badly disguised ends expressed by the Pope, while ready the following day to act in direct contradiction of all that he so passionately urged.

On the 24th of November, while Machiavelli in Romagna was still in the dark respecting the Duke's designs and torturing his wits to divine them, Giustinian wrote from Rome: "The first blow will be struck at Sinigaglia to prevent the Prefettessa from helping the Duke of Urbino, whom the Pope madly desires to get into his hands"[2] The latter was continually collecting money for his son, who spent about 1000 ducats a day[3] besides all that he got by robbery and pillage. So extraordinary was his impatience for news of the Duke's progress that when the latter halted for some time at Cesena, he repeatedly shouted, beside himself with vexation: "We don't know what the devil he is staying there for; we have written to him to make the best of this good time—'al fio de putta bastardo!' and such like oaths and words in Spanish"[4] To distract his mind from these thoughts and the public attention from his secret manœuvres, he got up popular festivals and masquerades, which marched in procession through the streets of Rome and became most indecent in front of the windows, whence he looked down upon them, his old frame

[1] Giustinian, despatches of the 7th and 15th of November, and 2nd of December, 1502

[2] Giustinian, despatch of the 15th of November, 1502. It is the second written on that day, and is marked No 168.

[3] Despatch of the 17th of December.

[4] Despatch of the 23rd of December.

naries towards a reconciliation, and the ambassador, without being troubled by the doubts and uncertainties of the Florentine, instantly noticed that they were being carried on so as to omit powerful personages who might afterwards prove obstacles to any violation of the terms or any sanguinary solution.[1] Meanwhile no time was lost. The Pope acknowledged having sent the Duke within a few days the sum of 36,000 ducats.[2] He collected artillery, made warlike preparations as though the enemies were thundering at the gates, and took money "as much from friends as from enemies, not caring whether from Orsini or Colonnesi, and behaves like a drowning man clutching hold of straws."[3]

Without at all endeavouring to discover the principles of a new science of politics, Giustinian was no less intent than Machiavelli on giving a graphic picture of all that he beheld; and from the early part of November, observing that the monstrous ill faith with which the negotiations were pursued, was evident from the Pope's own words, he transcribed these to the Doge *de verbo ad verbum*, adding: "And were it possible, I would fain paint the thing before your eyes, for often the manner of speech teaches men more of the intrinsic meaning than the words themselves;" and every one is persuaded that this is a mock reconciliation[4] In fact, on reading over the names of the Orsini who had signed it, the Pope said, laughing, to the Venetian ambassador, "Does it not seem to you that this is a company of scoundrels and bankrupts? Do you not see by the terms, how fearful they are, and how they confess themselves traitors, not excepting the Cardinal himself, who feigns to be our friend, and yet insists on the condition of only staying in Rome when it may suit him to do so?" And Giustinian then remarked that, "The Orsini might be very sure that they had now cut their own throats"[5] In fact, they showed incomprehensible blindness, especially the Cardinal, who was always in attendance on the Pope, as though he wished to fall into the trap of his own accord.

Alexander's endeavours to gain the friendship of the Venetian Republic coincided with his belief in the near approach and certainty of the Duke's new triumphs in Romagna. He called the ambassador aside, and with his arms crossed and pressed to his breast, deplored to him that the jealousy of Italian potentates

[1] Despatch of the 22nd of October. [2] Despatch of the 23rd of October.
[3] Despatch of the 24th of October.
[4] Giustinian, despatch of the 4th of November.
[5] The original expression in Venetian dialect is: "that the Orsini had taken *tossego a termene*," *i.e.*, poison that would act in a given time. Giustinian, despatch of the 6th of November, and note to p. 195 of vol I.

shaking with libertine laughter.[1] He passed his evenings in the Vatican, often keeping up his "customary diversions," till dawn, for certain fair ladies never failed him, and indeed, "without them there was no feast worth having;" and also hundreds of ducats were staked at his Holiness's gambling tables. In these amusements the Cardinal Orsini often shared, to the astonishment of the whole Court, who could not understand why he should so weakly "entangle himself in the net" of his own accord[2]

On the 31st of December the Pope wandered about the halls of the Vatican, saying that he could not imagine what the Duke was doing spending a thousand ducats a-day for nothing; but then, unable to restrain his good humour, would laughingly add: "He always wants to do something fresh, his mind is too great." And the cardinals begged him to be easy, for the Duke knew how to turn his money to account. "We are all awaiting his return to get up a fine carnival. We know well, we know well," said the Pope, still laughing, "that you all think of nothing else." This was the very day upon which Niccolò Machiavelli announced the capture of Sinigaglia and of the Duke's enemies. After mass the following day, the Holy Father summoned the ambassadors there present, and told them the great news, affecting to have been surprised by it; and he added that the Duke never forgave any who had injured him, and did not leave his vengeance to others, and he threatened those who had offended him, especially Oliverotto, "whom the Duke had sworn to hang with his own hands." The cardinals stood round him and tickled his ears[3] "with their various congratulations, while he freely descanted on the virtues and magnanimity of the Duke." Then they glanced at each other, and shrugging their shoulders, began to speculate upon what would happen next.[4]

In fact, on the 3rd of January, 1503, the Pope having received the positive intelligence — still unknown to the rest of the world—of the strangling of Oliverotto and Vitellozzo, called Cardinal Orsini in great haste to the Vatican. The victim presented himself with the Governor and Jacopo da Santa Croce, who, it seems, had received orders to accompany him, although pretending to do so by chance. As soon as the Cardinal

[1] Burchard speaks in his "Diario" (25th November) of a masquerade of thirty persons in the Piazza of St. Peter *habentes nasos longos et grossos in formam priaporum sive membrorum virilium, in magna quantitate, precedente valigia cardinalari*. The Pope looked on at his window.

[2] Despatch of the 30th of December.

[3] An expression used by Giustinian to signify that they praised and flattered him.

[4] Giustinian, despatch of the 1st of January, 1503.

at the Vatican and retained his disguise, although recognized by every one.[1]

Machiavelli meanwhile, his imagination fired, his mind full of all he had seen and heard of the Duke Cæsar and the Borgia in general, had returned to his Florence chancery, where he continued to read and write letters relating to those personages. But any one inclined to think him thoroughly deceived in his judgment of the true character of the Pope and the Pope's son, need only look through the first "Legazione" to Rome and the first "Decennale," to be convinced of the contrary. In the latter he styles the Duke "a man without compassion, rebellious to Christ, the Hydra, the basilisk, deserving of the most wretched end, and speaks of the Pope in almost identical terms."[2]

Yet, as we have related, it was in associating with Valentinois, that his mind first conceived and shaped out the idea—which was henceforth to occupy his whole life—of a science of Statecraft separate from, and independent of, every moral consideration. In such separation he saw the sole means of clearly formulating this science, and founding it on a new basis. He was going through a process of thought almost resembling that of a man attempting for the first time to investigate the laws of the rise and decline of the wealth of nations, and studying the economic problem no less in the merchant, manufacturer, or agriculturist who are producers, than in the soldier who is a pillager, or the brigand and pirate who are robbers. It was from this more or less abstract and forced separation of a single social phenomenon from all the rest, that political economy in fact arose, and to this the rapidity of its growth was due as well as

[1] Giustinian, despatches of the 26th and 27th of February.

[2] When the Duke hoodwinks the Orsini, he calls him the *basilisk;* when the Duke goes towards Perugia, he calls him the *hydra;* when the Duke hopes in Julius II., he remarks:—

> "E quel Duca in altrui trovar credette
> Quella pietà che non conobbe mai."

When the Duke is treacherously seized, and imprisoned by Consalvo di Cordova, Machiavelli says:—

> "gli pose la soma
> Che meritava un ribellante a Cristo."

And lastly, after narrating the death of Alexander VI., he adds:—

> "Del qual seguirno le sante pedate
> Tre sue familiari e care ancelle,
> Lussuria, Simonia e Crudeltate."

We shall see what he says later in the first "Legazione" to Rome.

the "general opinion had already drunk of the cup poisoned for him by the Pope, who then ordered the physicians to give him their best care."[1] The 15th, he was found, they said, in high fever; the 22nd he was dead; the 24th they were called on to depone that he had died a natural death. Then, by order of his Holiness, public obsequies were performed in his honour.[2]

The Duke was now expected. The Cardinal d'Este had fled from Rome at this announcement, in terror of his life. Among the thousand different rumours afloat, it was even said that he loved Donna Sancia, the Duke's sister-in-law and the Duke's mistress.[3]

Such of the Orsini as had escaped slaughter, the Savelli, and the Colonna, had taken arms, and having entrenched themselves at Ceri, Bracciano, and other points, attacked the bridge of Nomentano on the 23rd of January. And although they were repulsed, the Pope had the palace placed in a state of defence; became maddened with rage and alarm; went about shrieking that he would root out the Orsini family, and begged his Duke to come to him without loss of time. The latter was now on the road, to the very last spreading devastation by the way. At San Quirico, finding that all the inhabitants had fled upon his approach excepting two old men and nine old women, he had them strung up by their arms, with a slow fire under their feet, to make them reveal where treasure was hidden; and, as they could not tell him this, they had to die. He committed similar atrocities at Montefiascone, Acquapendente, Viterbo, &c.[4]

Although everything gave way before him, and many of his foes had retreated, yet Ceri and Bracciano held out against the insufficient artillery of the Pope, whom the Duke did not dare to assist openly, on account of the orders received from France, to which however the Holy Father paid no attention. In this way matters proceeded slowly, and on the 26th of February, leaving the fifty armed men who had accompanied him in a neighbouring villa, the Duke entered Rome with Cardinal Borgia, Cardinal d'Alibret and three servants, all masked. In the evening he was present at the representation of one of the usual comedies

[1] Giustinian, Despatch of the 21st February, 1503.

[2] Despatches of 22nd, 23rd, and 24th February.

[3] "Quia idem Cardinalibus diligebat et cognescebat principissam, uxorem fratris dicti Ducis, quam et ipse Dux cognoscebat carnaliter." Burchardi, as quoted by Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. vii. p. 486, note 4.

[4] This is the account given by Burchardi in his "Diary," at the date of the 23rd January, 1503.

"Descrizione,"[1] in which the Duke's crafty fashion of killing his enemies is painted in the manner most suitable to the object that the author had in view. Otherwise it would be impossible to account for the diverse manner in which Machiavelli now narrates the very facts which he had described in the "Legazione," at the time when he was upon the spot, and it was his duty to supply the Ten with correct information.

The "Descrizione" begins with a picture of the Duke on his return from Lombardy, whither he had gone to exculpate himself to the King of France "from the many calumnies concerning him spread by the Florentines in consequence of the Arezzo rebellion" This is positively untrue, since the Florentines had not calumniated him, and this should in any case suffice to change the opinion of all those who considered the "Descrizione" to be no more than one of Machiavelli's usual letters. Certainly the secretary could not have spoken to the Ten or the Signoria of the *calumnies* of the Florentines. In continuation he gives a very brief account of the conspiracy at "La Magione," and the reconciliation afterwards concluded between the rebels and the Duke, whose astuteness he brings out in high relief. In this work the Duke is made to leave Imola when "November is going out," and in the "Legazione" on the 10th of December; he sets forth from Cesena "about the middle of December," whereas in the "Legazione" he was still "about to start" on the 26th of December.

The "Descrizione" then goes on to relate how, after the taking of Sinigaglia by the Vitelli and Orsini, the fortress refused to surrender, the governor having declared that he would yield it to none "but the Duke in person," who, on that account, was invited to come. And, observes Machiavelli, he considered the occasion a good one and unlikely to arouse suspicion, and to give a still better colour to the affair, dismissed the French.[2] In the "Legazione," on the contrary, he had said—what too is clearly proved by all contemporary historians and ambassadors—that the French suddenly went away on the 22nd of December, because they had been recalled without any reasons being given, and certainly much to the Duke's peril and chagrin.[3] Indeed, on the

[1] "Descrizione del modo tenuto dal Duca Valentino nello ammazzare Vitellozzo Vitelli, Oliverotto da Fermo, il Signor Pagolo e il duca di Gravina Orsini."

[2] All the editions say—"*and for greater security*, he dismissed the French soldiery;" but the original autograph preserved in the Florence Archives (Carte Strozziane, file 139, sheets 208 and fol.) says—"*e per più assicurargli*," *i.e.*, to better deceive the conspirators.

[3] On the 28th December, 1502, the Ten wrote to the Commissary Giovanni Ridolfi, in consequence of news received from Machiavelli and others, that they

some of the errors which it afterwards tried to eliminate. Machiavelli, in studying the actions of Cæsar Borgia made a distinction of somewhat the same nature, for this distinction appeared to him in the light of a real fact rather than as an hypothesis or abstraction. At that time he only succeeded in formulating a few general maxims, without rising to a theoretic conception of principles, neither had he sufficient grasp of his method to attempt to enrol his principles in a body of doctrines. Almost unconsciously, his ideas assumed the form of an ideal personage, representing the acute, able, and audacious statesman restrained by no scruples of conscience, no moral influence, from trying to achieve his fixed purpose, no matter what obstacles stood in the path, no matter what acts of treachery and bloodshed had to be performed. In short, in examining the actions of Valentinois, his mind had created an imaginary Valentinois, to which later he continually recurred. It is the well-known figure so often making its appearance amid the maxims of the "Discorsi" and the "Principe," as though to recall their primary origin, and to once more testify that the author had laid the foundations of his policy solely in the realities of life, without going back to the Supreme good, or running aground on any metaphysical abstraction. At a later period he obeyed a similar impulse in writing his "Vita di Castruccio Castracani," which, as all know, is no history, but rather an effort to glean from history his own political ideal. This explains to us the great praise coupled with severe blame accorded by him to Valentinois. His praise is generally bestowed on the ideal personage, his blame on the historical. The one however is not so different from the other as to prevent us from sometimes confusing them, especially as the author himself occasionally does so, when carried away by his imagination, which seems especially to dominate him when he is apparently reasoning in cold blood. Nor is it an uncommon case to find that men of the most reflective and cautious temperament may at times fall a sudden and complete prey to their own imaginations.

But at this period of his life, whatever the state of his mind and ideas may have been, Machiavelli had no time for scientific meditations, nor for the composition of elaborate works. He therefore contented himself with writing a brief narrative of all that he had witnessed in Romagna, not for the purpose of giving exact historic details—for those existed in the numerous despatches of the Legation, in spite of several having been lost—but rather to establish more clearly the prudence and, in his opinion, the marvellous talent of the Duke. And he composed the well-known



CHAPTER VI.

Necessity for new taxes—"Dicorso sulla provvisione del denaro"—Defensive measures against the Borgia—War with Pisa—New misdeeds of the Pope—Predominance of the Spaniards in the Neapolitan kingdom—Death of Alexander VI.—Election of Pius III. and of Julius II.

(1503.)



HE Florentines were now in great straits from the difficulty of finding the funds urgently required for hiring fresh troops: since not only were they threatened by the Borgia on the one hand, and the Pisans on the other, but a new French army was on the march towards Naples, and all dreaded the complications and dangers of which this might prove the source. Yet this was the moment at which the Gonfaloniere Soderini, whose rule hitherto had been very popular, for the first time encountered the strong opposition of the citizens. Seven different proposals were brought before the Great Council during February and March, for the purpose of obtaining the necessary funds, but none could be carried. Nor was it easy to decide what measures to adopt, for were a heavy tax proposed, it could not be accepted by a people already so overburdened, while a slight one would fail in its object. Besides, there were additional motives of discontent to increase the present opposition. The wealthier citizens had not only paid the usual imposts, but had been obliged to lend very considerable sums of money to the Commune, which was therefore their debtor to the extent of four hundred thousand florins, eighteen thousand of which were due to Soderini and his nephews. Accordingly, the rich declined to hear of any special measures, but demanded a general tax of the usual kind, which, weighing equally upon all, might enable the Republic to pay at least a portion of her debt

20th of December Machiavelli wrote that this matter "had turned this Court's brains topsy-turvy," and on the 23rd, that thus the Duke "had lost more than half his strength and two-thirds of his reputation." Now in the "Descrizione" all this is changed into a stroke of cunning on the part of the Duke. Even the road from Fano to Sinigaglia is here described very differently from the minute description given in the fragment remaining to us of the letter from which we quote, and which gives a summary of recent events.

And to the end the "Descrizione" goes on in the same strain The Duke communicates his design to eight of his trusty adherents, some of whose names are even given, yet in the "Legazione" there is no mention of anything of the sort. There is also a very different account of the seizure of the four captains, and the dying utterances of Oliverotto and Vitellozzo are given verbatim, although of such words none can confirm nor deny the historic truth, the author having made no mention of them elsewhere, nor it being at all likely that he had any certain knowledge of them. How can patent contradictions such as these be accounted for, without admitting that this "Descrizione" is something different from exact history? The Duke, whom Machiavelli here depicts as calumniated by the Florentines, and far more able and acute than the personage described in the "Legazione," is in fact the precursor of his "Principe," in which we shall behold later, put in a theoretic form, that which we now see only in an individual and concrete shape. The scientific conception, though not as yet very clear, is however already contained in the ideal personage evoked before us.

could not understand the cause of this sudden withdrawal, no danger having arisen in Lombardy. "Whence it may be concluded that it has been in order to check this sinister career and all these designs of aggrandisement." At all events it was certainly no trick of the Duke. Archivio Florentino, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 104, sheet 59. See also A. Giustinian, "Dispacci," vol. i. p. 293, and document iii. at the end of that volume.

command of Soderini, or was veritably the speech read or recited by the latter in the Council. It was certainly composed as though destined for that purpose. Written in a way to allow of certain points being more freely developed in delivery, it has singular strength and concision of style, and contains many of those maxims, general reflections, and historical reminiscences, which were still, as it were, floating in the secretary's mind, and, if not as yet thoroughly arranged, were always expressed with incomparable lucidity.[1]

He begins by remarking that all States find it necessary to unite strength with prudence. The Florentines had testified their prudence by giving unity and a head to the government; but they failed in their duty, in refusing to furnish supplies, when, but a few months before, they had been on the verge of total destruction at the hands of Valentinois. Nor did it avail them to say that the Duke had now no pretext for attacking them, because all are to be considered as enemies who can deprive us of our own, without our being able to defend ourselves. "And at present you are incapable of defending your subjects, and

[1] "Parole da dirle sopra la provvisione del danaio, fatto prima un poco di proemio e di scusa." It was first published in the Florence "Antologia" (July, 1822, vol. vii. pp 3–10), from one of Machiavelli's autograph manuscripts; it was afterwards reprinted in Milan by the Rusconi Press, 1823, in the "Opere Minori" of Machiavelli: Florence, Le Monnier, 1852, and the more recent but little known edition of the entire works, issued in Florence by A Usigli, 1857. Some believed it to have been recited by Machiavelli himself in the Great Council; but he, as a salaried official of the Government, had no power either to vote or join in the discussion, nor could any citizen, with the solitary exception of the Gonfaloniere, have held the language contained in this discourse. In the Great Council members either voted for the government proposals, or spoke in favour of them, previous to voting. Members did not, however, vote in their own names, but in that of the different benches (*pancate*) into which the citizens divided in order to consult on the decision to be taken; and all this with infinite care and precaution. Parenti tells us of a certain individual who, on this very occasion, was subjected to imprisonment and then exile, for having spoken too violently against past taxes (See too my "*Storia di Girolamo Savonarola,*" Book II. chap v., in which I have given a minute description of the mode of procedure then in force in the Council) In the "Pratiche" (answering to the Committees of the English Parliament), which were less public, greater freedom of language was employed; but setting aside the improbability of Machiavelli taking part in these "Pratiche," the "Discorse" here in question is addressed to the citizens in general, and has the gravity of tone suitable to a large assembly. And still less can we admit the other hypothesis of its having been addressed to the Dieci di Balìa, who were Machiavelli's superiors. It is written for delivery in the Great Council, where Soderini alone could hold similar language In fact, Parenti tells us that the Gonfaloniere made a great speech then, and certainly Machiavelli composed it on this occasion, either by command, or as a literary exercise Guicciardini has left us many discourses of the same description which are simply exercises in composition.

to those upon whom she had pressed most heavily. In fact, the various proposals supported by the Gonfaloniere had been drawn up in conformity with this rule, but all these were rejected by the Council, where the majority, composed of poorer men, complained that Soderini, the people's choice, showed undue favour to the powerful. He sought, they added, to regain the sums which he had lent to the State, although in receipt of so generous a stipend. Then, too, there were the outcries of those who were impoverished by the numerous economies introduced into the new administration; and there was even much grumbling, because the Gonfaloniere's wife, one of the Malaspini family, "very handsome, though middle-aged, and a good woman of royal manners," to use Cerretani's expression, had in these days taken up her abode in the palace, so that ladies were continually seen going up and down its stairs, an unheard-of thing in Florence.

As the natural consequence of all this, the credit of the Republic, which had rapidly increased through the election of the new Gonfaloniere, and the regularity of his administration, now sank with equal rapidity, and the shares of the Monte Comune and the Monte delle Fanciulle[1] were negotiated in the market at the same low figure as before. Accordingly Soderini, being weary of temporizing measures, assembled the Great Council and made a notable speech, in which, after dwelling on the dangers now imminent, he charged the citizens themselves to determine the nature of the new tax in any way that pleased them, provided it fulfilled the object of furnishing the requisite funds for the preservation and defence of the Republic. So finally a *decima*—or tithe—was voted on all landed property, including that of the Church, if permission could be obtained from Rome; and even a small "*arbitrio*" was agreed upon. This so-called *arbitrio* was a tax upon professions, and probably derived its name from the fact of being imposed without any fixed rules, especially in the present emergency, when it was left entirely to the discretion of the magistrates. Matters then speedily returned to their normal condition, all difficulties having been overcome far more easily than was anticipated.[2]

Machiavelli now applied himself to the composition of a discourse, that, in his opinion, should have been made upon the occasion. We cannot ascertain whether it was written by

[1] Monte Comune—the Public Debt—Monte delle Fanciulle—a State Insurance Office, which gave marriage portions to girls in return for small yearly payments —*Translator's note.*

[2] Parenti, "Storie Fiorentine," MS. in the Florence National Library, Cl II cod. 133, vol. v. at sheet 87 and fol.

Meanwhile the negotiations set on foot by the Borgia towards an alliance with the Florentines, still dragged on without hope of any definite result, for now the latter did nothing without the consent of France, who at this period was alienated from the Pope on account of the favour shown by him to the Spaniards. France was endeavouring to arrange a league between Sienna, Florence, Lucca and Bologna, of which, so far, the only effect had been to assist the return of Petrucci to Sienna. Thither in April the Florentines despatched Machiavelli to communicate to Petrucci the Pope's wishes and designs; and this was done rather in proof of friendship, than from any hope or desire of arriving at a practical conclusion[1] As soon as the necessary supplies were voted, they gave serious attention to preparations of defence against any sudden attack from the Borgia, and Machiavelli again returned to his desk to write letters. He advised one commissary to keep an eye upon the enemy, another to provision the fortress, a third was severely reproved for negligence and laziness. In May he gave notice that Valentinois was disbanding his troops, who might possibly hazard some *coup de main* on their own account, or even attempt, under like false pretences—to do good service to the Duke, whose soldiers were near Perugia, and threatening the confines. "Wherefore, although the prohibition of France prevents our believing an attack possible, nor allows us the faintest suspicion that His Majesty would consent to one, still we must not slumber, but be as much upon the alert as though we expected one, seeing the way in which things now go on, almost always turning out as no one could have imagined. The more then you see affairs darkening, and know them to be menacing, so much the more does it behove you to keep your eyes open!"[2]

It is true, the Ten had little fear of open attack, but they dreaded thefts, rapine, pillage, and incitements to rebellion, in some parts of their territory, since the responsibility of such deeds could be easily disavowed. "If our fears of open attack are as of twelve *soldi* in the *lira*, our fears of robbery are as of eighteen to twenty."[3] It may have been that the sole object of all these threatening signs, was to prevent the usual raids on the Pisans, by diverting elsewhere the strength and vigilance of the Republic.

[1] See the *Commissione* entrusted to him by the Ten, "Opere," vol. vi. p. 261.
[2] *Loc. cit.*, at sheet 163.
[3] The *Lira* being of 20 soldi, the first chance was as of 12 to 20, the second of 18 to 20 Letter of the 14th of May, 1503, cl. x. dist. 3, No 103, at sheet 172. See the Appendix, document vi. Files 103 and 104 contain numerous other letters by Machiavelli on the same argument.

you stand between two or three cities, desiring your ruin rather than your preservation. And looking beyond Tuscany, you will see that all Italy is subject to the Venetians, or to the Pope, or the King of France. The former hate you, and seek to extort money from you for the purpose of attacking you; it were better you should spend it in making war upon them. All know what small confidence may be placed in the Pope and the Duke, with whom it has been impossible as yet to conclude any alliance; and even did you succeed in forming one, I repeat that these latter will only be your friends, while unable to attack you, for whereas laws, agreements, and contracts bind private individuals to keep faith, arms alone avail with potentates Regarding the King of France, it is necessary that some one should tell you the truth, and I will be that person. Either he will find you the only obstacle to his designs upon Italy, in which case you are lost, or he will find an obstacle in others, and then your salvation will depend upon your making yourselves respected in such wise that none may dare to leave you at his mercy, and that he may not dare to set you aside among those of no account. Remember, at all events, that one cannot always use another's sword, and therefore it were well to keep your own in readiness and girded on, even when the enemy be far off. Many of you might remember that when Constantinople was about to be taken by the Turks, the Emperor foresaw the coming destruction, and his own resources being insufficient to ward it off, he called the citizens together, and explained to them their danger and the remedies required. They all laughed him to scorn. "The siege took place. The very citizens who had jeered at the forebodings of their master, no sooner heard the cannon thundering against the walls and the shouts of the enemies' host, than they ran weeping to the Emperor with heaps of gold; but he drove them all away, saying—'go, die with your gold, since ye would not live without it. . . . If, however, others learn wisdom from their neighbours' perils, you do not learn it even from your own. . . . For I tell you that fortune will not help those who will not help themselves; nor will heaven itself sustain a thing that is determined to fall. But beholding you free Florentines, with your liberty in your own hands, I will not believe that you desire to fall. For surely I must believe that men born free, and wishing to remain free, will have due respect for liberty!'"

Here we must call attention to the tendency, more and more observable in Machiavelli, to build up maxims of general policy, even in speaking of so simple a matter as the suggestion of a new tax.

But, as regarded Pisa, Florence was determined to take advantage of the favourable season.

In fact two commissaries of war had already been sent to the camp, Antonio Giacomini—who filled the office of Captain with ever-increasing zeal—and Tommaso Tosinghi. In April a circular of the Ten decreed the enrolment within the territory of several thousand pioneers and delvers to lay waste the country, and in May, beams, mortars, carpenters, and so large a number of foot soldiers, men-at-arms and foragers were made ready, that the Pisans were alarmed and showed signs of wishing to come to terms But neither Giacomini nor Tosinghi were to be deceived by their devices, and declared that only deeds availed, not words; and for this they received much praise from the Ten, in whose name Niccolò Machiavelli addressed a letter to them on the 22nd of May, exhorting them "to pursue the same course in all your actions, ever flourishing the sword in one hand, and salve in the other, so that they may know they have the option of choosing which they will."[1] And on the 23rd of this month 300 men-at-arms, 200 light horse, 3000 infantry, and 2000 pioneers took the field, and thanks to the energy of Giacomini, in two days did such tremendous havoc in the valley of the Arno, that the Ten were astounded as well as gratified, and wished the work of devastation to be carried on into the Valley of the Serchio.[2] In writing all these letters Machiavelli did not always confine himself to transmitting superior orders; but sometimes digressed into advice, directions, suggestions, entering into the minutest particulars, as though he were a military leader upon the spot, while all the time repeating that he left everything to the commissaries and captains[3]

By the first week in June the Valley of the Serchio had been entirely laid waste, and the army had been joined by the Baily of Caen, who though bringing with him little else than the French flag and a few men-at-arms, immediately began the usual complaints, the usual pretensions. Yet his presence and that of his followers, though almost ineffectual either for good or evil, depressed the courage of the Pisans and raised that of the Florentines, who soon captured Vico Pisano and La Verruca, much to the content of the Ten,[4] and on the 18th of June they ordered

[1] Archives Fiorentino, cl. x. dist 3, No. 108, at sheet 7*t*.

[2] Letter of the 25th of May, 1503, in the Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No 108, at sheet 18.

[3] See letter of the 27th May in Appendix, document vii. cl. x. dist. 3, No. 107, at sheet 24.

[4] Letter of the 14th of June, cl. x. dist. 5, No. 107, at sheet 47*t*.

gold were confiscated, and his wife and child made homeless wanderers.[1]

Meanwhile, on the 19th of May Troches[2] or Troccio, one of the Borgia's most trusted assassins, suddenly fled from Rome, and was hotly pursued by his late masters. Valentinois, in a letter of that date, ordered "all our vassals," under pain of being considered rebels, to stop the fugitive, and prayed all his friends to assist them, since the motive of his flight was a matter "against the honour of the King of France."[3] Others however affirmed that the reason of this assassin's flight was rage at not being included in the list of new cardinals, that he had manifested his anger to the Pope, who bade him hold his tongue unless he wished to be killed by the Duke; and that upon this Troccio had revealed to France the secret manœuvres with Spain. Hence the fury of the Borgia, and their ardent desire to get him into their hands

[1] Giustinian, despatch of the 8th of June.

[2] Despatch 387, the first dated May, 1503, and despatch 390 the second, May 20.

[3] This letter is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case 1, No. 1, and was published by Passerini, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. iv. p. 298. But he did not correctly interpret the name of the individual in question, having read it Noch instead of Troche, and therefore mistaking him for some unknown soldier. Nor did he perceive that the sheet only contains a copy made by Machiavelli of the original letter. Deceived perhaps by the circumstance that Machiavelli had somewhat imitated the conventional signature specially used by Valentinois in official letters, he took it for granted that this letter had been written by Machiavelli and signed by Valentinois. This obliged him to imagine that the Florentine secretary had made an unknown journey to Rome, and caused him to recur to his other hypothesis, that Machiavelli had been the counsellor of Borgia's policy and assassinations. An examination of the document destroys all these theories. Cæsar's signature is not an autograph, but an imitation of one; the signature of Agapito is wanting, though found on all Cæsar's decrees; there is no seal nor stamp of any sort, and the letter bears no address; but on the back of it there is written in Machiavelli's hand and with some abbreviations. 1503, concerning Messer Troche. Signor Nitti, *op. cit.* vol. i. pp. 223-24, note (1), in noticing that Machiavelli wrote a letter from Florence dated the 16th May, doubts the pretended journey to Rome, and brings forward another equally impossible hypothesis, *i. e.*, that Valentinois had sent Machiavelli a blank decree already signed. When he formed that theory Signor Nitti must have forgotten for a moment who the Borgia were, and what manner of man was Valentinois. For it is not intelligible that a blank decree should have been sent to Machiavelli, when only a simple circular had to be written, and in no case would Valentinois have committed himself to such a proceeding, even with Agapito, Don Micheletto, or any other of his trustiest adherents, among whom Machiavelli cannot certainly be included. And in conclusion we must remark that not only did Machiavelli write letters from Florence on the 16th, but also on the 17th, 18th, 19th, and 21st of May, as is shown by the Registers of the Ten in the Florence Archives (class x. dist. 3, No. 108, from sheet 2 to sheet 12). The Roman journey therefore becomes not only improbable but impossible. Troccio fled from Rome on the 19th of May (Giustinian, despatch of 19th of May), and the order for his arrest is dated from Rome the same day. Machiavelli therefore could not possibly have written it.

uncertainty as to pending events in Naples, the Pope showed a leaning towards Spain, the Duke towards France, and thus "each blaming the other, both pursued their common designs"[1] Indeed they had greater hopes than ever of carrying out their plans, amid the inevitable coming confusion, and they left no means unturned of collecting money. On the 29th of March the Venetian ambassador wrote that a Bull had been issued, creating eighty new offices in the Curia, which were immediately sold at seven hundred and sixty ducats apiece. "If your Sublimity will cast up the sum, you will see how much money the Pontiff has gained."[2] And in May he added that nine men of the worst description had been made cardinals, on payment by each of a round sum of money, and by some of more than 20,000 ducats, so that altogether between 120 and 130 thousand ducats had been got together; and Alexander had shown the world that a Pope's revenues might be swelled *ad libitum*.[3]

All this did not suffice, and resort was had to other means. On the night of the 10th of April, Cardinal Michiel expired after two days of violent sickness, and before dawn his house had been stripped by the order of the Pope, who, according to Giustinian,[4] obtained more than 150,000 ducats in gold, plate, and precious stuffs. In fact, on going to the Vatican the ambassador found all the doors closed, and could not be received because the money was being counted over. This was still going on in the hall to which he was admitted on the morning of the 13th, on a summons from the Pope. His Holiness said to him: "See, there are only 23,832 ducats, yet all the land rings with the news that we have had between 80 and 100,000 ducats in cash" And he appealed to the testimony of those who were present, "as though," observes the ambassador, "'twould be a great matter for them to serve him by a lie." Nevertheless the Pope earnestly begged him to institute inquiries in the Venetian territories where there was more of the Cardinal's money; the sum he had found seeming very small to him. Before long Jacopo da Santa Croce—he who had assisted the Pope to seize Cardinal Orsini, by conducting him to the Vatican —was also made prisoner, and after treating with him for the purchase of his life for a good sum of money, lost his head on the 8th of June. His corpse was left stretched on the bridge of St. Angelo until evening, his possessions both in land and in

[1] Giustinian, despatch 304, the first dated 3rd of March. See also that of the 19th of March.
[2] Despatch of the 29th of March.
[3] Despatch of the 31st of May.
[4] Despatch of the 13th of April, 1503.

The Borgia made every effort to make ready for new expeditions, amidst the general confusion expected from the rapid changes now sweeping over the kingdom of Naples. In Calabria, D'Aubigny had been defeated by the Spaniards who had crossed over from Sicily at Cerignola, Nemours by Gonsalvo de Cordova, who, having issued from Barletta, and achieved a brilliant victory, entered Naples as a conqueror in May. In short, the French had lost everything but the fortress of Gaeta—where a great part of the defeated survivors took refuge, and Venosa, occupied by Louis d'Ars and Santa Severina, where the Prince of Rossano was besieged Louis XII. had to make a fresh beginning by openly attacking Spain, and sending another army into Italy under Louis La Trémoille and Francesco Gonzaga, an army to be increased by the promised contingents from Florence, Sienna, Mantova, Bologna and Ferrara. This expedition however proceeded with incredible slowness, on account of the suspected neutrality of Venice, and the more and more fickle and incomprehensible policy of the Pope. His Holiness openly leaned towards Spain, who was allowed by him to enlist men publicly in Rome; but he gave the French to understand that he would help them in their enterprise, and even pay two-thirds of the expenses, provided they gave Naples or Sicily to Valentinois, indemnifying themselves for the gift, by taking what they pleased in North Italy[1] At the same time he made the largest offers of friendship and alliance to the Venetians, to induce them to join with him against France and against Spain, for the general preservation of Italy from foreigners.[2] On the other hand, he pressingly demanded from Maximilian King of the Romans—who was still thinking of coming to Italy to possess himself of the imperial crown—the investiture of Pisa for the Duke, saying that otherwise he would be compelled to throw himself into the arms of France, who promised him the kingdom of Naples in exchange for Romagna[3]

What successful result was to be expected from conduct so foolish, we leave to the judgment of those who have exalted the acumen and political insight of the Borgia. Treating with all against all, the Pope found himself, after so many exertions, condemned to inaction and unable to count on the friendship of any power. And the Duke, who was preparing to march on Sienna to unite with Pisa, and, once in possession of the latter city, to push on to the attack of Florence, was also prevented from stirring a step; since he would have met the French army

[1] Giustinian, despatches of the 7th and 8th of June, 1503.
[2] Despatch of the 29th of May.
[3] Despatches of the 7th of June and 31st of July.

However this may be, Troccio was seized on board a vessel bound for Corsica, and being instantly brought back to Rome, was confined in a tower in the Trastevere quarter. There, after a few hours, the Duke made his appearance, and after a short colloquy with the prisoner, withdrew to a spot from whence he could secretly spy into the cell, and sent Don Micheletto in to strangle him. An inventory had already been made of his effects, which were distributed according to the orders of the Pope. And thus, observed Giustinian, of all the Borgia's trusted and most faithful tools two only survived, Don Micheletto and Romolino, for whom the same fate as had befallen the others was probably in store.[1] It really appeared as if there would never be an end to persecution and murder. Many were imprisoned as Jews, a still larger number as heretics. These pretexts sufficed for forcibly entering their houses, and stripping them of all their contents; then bargains were made to sell the prisoners their lives for sums of money varying in amount. "All these (arrests) are tricks to make money," wrote the Florentine ambassador Vittorio Soderini, and Giustinian said much the same thing.[2] The latter reported later that on the 1st of August, towards the Ave Maria, after only two days' illness, died Giovanni Borgia, Cardinal of Monreale "at whose death the Pontiff wore a very cheerful aspect, although Monreale was his own nephew." On going to the Vatican the ambassador was refused admittance on the score of the Pope's trouble at the death of his nephew the Cardinal, "and this trouble must have consisted in counting gold and fingering jewels." In fact, every one calculated that the property in cash and other effects amounted to 100,000 ducats, and it was generally asserted, "that he (the Cardinal) had also been sent the same way that all the other well fattened ones have gone, and the blame of this affair is laid upon the Duke"[3] Things had now reached such a point, that all who possessed or were supposed to possess money, trembled for their lives, "every moment thinking to see the executioner standing behind them."[4]

[1] Giustinian, despatch of the 8th of June, 1503. It may seem strange that a man like Troccio should have occupied himself with poetry; yet that would seem to have been the case from two letters of his, in which he earnestly begs the Marchioness of Mantova to send him certain sonnets. See the "Lucrezia Borgia" of Gregorovius, documents 42 and 43. Similar facts are by no means uncommon in the period of the Italian Renaissance. The Captain G. G. Trivulzio among other things lost in the taking of Milan, especially deplored the loss of a Quintus Curtius, and offered a large reward for its restitution.

[2] Giustinian, despatch of 19 of June and note.

[3] Ibid., despatch of 2nd of August, 1503.

[4] Ibid., despatch of the 8th of June.

The confusion was at the highest pitch. The Duke, although still so sick that his life was considered in danger, caused a large portion of his effects to be carried to the castle of St. Angelo, and his soldiers to be summoned to Rome. Don Michele, with some armed men, entered the Pope's apartments, and closing the doors, held a dagger to the throat of Cardinal Casanuova, threatening to kill him and throw him out of the window if he did not immediately give up the Pope's keys and money. In this way more than 100,000 ducats in gold, besides plate and jewels, amounting altogether to the value of above 300,000 ducats[1] came into the hands of the Duke But Don Michele forgot to search a room adjoining that in which Alexander had died, in which were precious mitres, jewelled rings, and silver vases enough to fill many chests.[2] The servants took everything else they could find in the rooms already pillaged. At last the doors were thrown open, and the death of the Pope was announced.

Up to the moment of the funeral, everything wore a lugubrious and sinister aspect. The corpse, after being washed and dressed, was left alone, with only two lighted candles. The Cardinals did not come, although summoned, nor even the *Penitenzieri* whose duty it was to recite prayers for the dead. On the following day the body was so much changed by corruption as to have lost all semblance of humanity. It was very black, swelled almost as broad as it was long, and the tongue so large that it filled the whole mouth and kept it agape.[3] At midday on the 10th of August, it was, according to custom, exhibited in St. Peter's church; "*tamen* being the ugliest, most monstrous and horrible dead body that was ever seen, without any form or likeness of humanity; for shame's sake they kept it covered with a cloth, and then before sunset they buried it, *adstantibus duobus cardinalibus* of those resident in the palace."[4]

In St. Peter's the breviary, from which the prayers were to be read, had been mislaid, and then a riot ensued between

[1] Sanuto gives details increasing this sum to 500,000 ducats. We have fixed it at the sum mentioned by the majority of writers

[2] Burchardi, "Diarium," vol. v. at sheet 1, and fol

[3] "Et continuo crevit turpido et negredo faciei, adeoque hora vigesima tertia qua eum vidi factus erat sicut pannus vel morus nigerrimus; facies livoris tota plena, nasus plenus; os amplissimum; lingua duplex in ore, quae labia tota implebat; os apertum et adeo horribile, quod nemo viderit unquam, vel esse tale dicerit." (Burchardi, "Diarium," MS. in the National Library of Florence, tom iv. at sheet 6) And it went on growing more and more horrible, as declare also all the ambassadors, Costabili, Giustinian, &c.

[4] Giustinian, despatch of the 19th of August, 1503, *hora* 24.

on his road, and would have been forced to declare himself openly for or against it—that is, either to attack it, or join in the march towards Naples: Wishing to be prepared for every eventuality, neither of these courses was open to him, and thus all his efforts, displays of craft and numerous assassinations, resulted in nothing but forced inaction and uncertainty.

This state of things was suddenly altered by a most unlooked-for event. On the evening of the 5th of August the Pope went with the Duke to a supper in the vineyard of Cardinal Adriano behind the Vatican, and remained there till after nightfall. The Roman fever, always prevalent in the month of August, was raging more severely than usual that year. Some of the ambassadors, many members of the Curia—especially those resident in the palace—had fallen ill; and therefore all who attended this supper, suffered more or less from fever in consequence. On the 7th, Giustinian found the Pope in his room covered with wraps, and he told the ambassador that he was taking care of himself, being alarmed by the many fever cases and deaths then happening in Rome.[1] On the 11th, Cardinal Adriano was in bed with the fever; on the 12th, the Pope was seized by an attack of fever and sickness; and the Duke also fell ill of the same complaint.[2] The Pope was now seventy-three years of age, and the danger of his condition was evident. In fact, symptoms of cerebral congestion soon set in; to reduce them copious blood-letting was resorted to, which, by weakening the patient, heightened the malady. An alarming stupor—almost like that of death—came on; on the 17th, the fever, which the Ferrarese ambassador styles "the well-known tertian,"[3] returned with such violent paroxysms, that the physician declared the case to be hopeless. The greatest disorder instantly ensued in the Vatican, and many began to provide for the safety of their property. The Pope, who during all these days had neither asked for the Duke, nor Lucrezia,[4] on the 18th confessed and received the last sacraments Towards six o'clock he had a fainting fit which resembled death, and only revived from it to draw his last breath immediately afterwards, about the vesper hour, in the presence of the Bishop of Carinola, the Datary and a few serving-men.[5]

[1] Giustinian, despatch of the of August, 1503, note 1, p. 99 of vol. ii.

[2] Despatch of the 13th of August.

[3] Also Burchardi speaks of it in his diary as *febris tertiana*.

[4] "Dux nunquam venit ad Papam in tota eius infirmitate nec in morte, nec papa fuit unquam memor sui vel Lucretiae in aliquo minimo verbo, etiam in tota sua infirmitate." Burchardi, "Diarium," MS. of the National Library of Florence, vol. iv. at sheet 1.

[5] Giustinian, despatches 484–87, dated 18th of August, 1503.

the ambassadors' despatches, especially those of Giustinian, who, day by day, details the origin and progress of the malady; and, being in continual intercourse with the Pope's physician, knew that cerebral congestion supervening on the fever was the real cause of the death. Even the Ferrarese ambassador, Beltrando Constabili, who, on the 19th, after the rapid change of the body, mentioned the generally credited rumour of poison, had explicitly declared on the 14th that the Pope's illness was tertian fever, and that there was no cause for wonder in it, since nearly the whole Court was suffering from the same malady, then very prevalent in Rome, "owing to the bad condition of the atmosphere." In any case, it would have been strange, to say the least, if poison administered at that supper, had only begun to show its effects after the interval of a whole week, when the fever was first manifested.

We will spare our readers other tales then spread about, of devils seen by the Pope's bedside, of how he had sold his soul to them at the very beginning of his reign, and similar fables, all the more readily believed, because of the incredulity of the age. On the 19th of August the Duke seemed on the point of death; all shops were closed, the Spaniards concealed themselves, and a rumour spread that Fabio Orsini had entered Rome, with Alviano and the other members of his family, full of the most furious schemes of revenge. Cæsar Borgia knew this; but he had thought of everything, as Machiavelli afterwards said, excepting the chance of being himself dying when the Pope was dead, and was now in the greatest perplexity.[1] His soldiers were riotous and set fire to the Orsini's houses, some of which were burnt down. At last, with the intervention of the ambassadors, the conclave succeeded in persuading all to make a kind of truce. The Orsini and the Colonna withdrew; the Duke, somewhat better, sent forward his artillery, and on the 2nd of September left Rome in a litter and went to the castle of Nepi, that was still in his possession. Here he was in the vicinity of the French army, actually on its way to Naples, and on which he relied for assistance; for he had suddenly declared for France, although still placing his entire confidence in the Spanish cardinals, by whom he was surrounded and supported.

Many cardinals were now arriving in Rome; among them Giuliano della Rovere, after ten years of exile, and Cardinal Ascanio Sforza, released from prison by the good offices of

[1] "Et nescit quo se vertit, nec ubi reclinet caput." Giustinian, despatch, 489, the second of the 19th of August, 1503.

the priests and soldiers, whereupon the clergy broke off their chants, and fled towards the sacristy, leaving the dead Pope almost alone. But, having deposited the corpse on the high altar, they feared it might be outraged by the indignant people, and therefore placed it with four lighted tapers behind a locked grating, and left it there all day. After four-and-twenty hours, it was carried into the chapel *de febribus*, where six workmen were joking and insulting the Pope's memory while digging the Pope's grave. Here the carpenters, having made the coffin too short and too narrow, pulled off the mitre, and covering the body with an old cloth, thrust it into the coffin by main force.[1] The mode of burial was such that the Marquis of Mantova—who was then in the neighbourhood of Rome with the French army—remarked in a letter to the Marchesa Isabella: "so mean was the tomb, that the deformed wife of the cripple at Mantova has a better one"[2]

The rapid decomposition of the body, owing to the corrupt state of the blood, and the circumstance of the Pope, Valentinois, and Cardinal Adriano all falling ill at the same time, gained universal credit for the rumour that all had been poisoned, for poison seemed inseparably connected with the name of the Borgia It was asserted that the Pope and the Duke had intended ridding themselves of the Cardinal; but that through the blunder of the cup-bearer, they themselves had drunk of the poisoned wine. But even could it be conceived that the Borgia should have been clumsy enough in their own special calling to allow such blunders to occur, the fact of the Cardinal's illness would still require explanation[3] Others declared that the Cardinal was saved, because, foreseeing the attempt, he had given the cup-bearer a bribe of 10,000 ducats to poison the Borgia instead. But these rumours lose all value when confronted with

[1] "Et cum pugnis pestarunt eum ut capsam intraret, sine intorticiis vel lumine aliquo, et sine aliquo presbitero vel persona una vel lumine" (Burchardi, "Diarium," *loc cit.*)

[2] Letter of the 22nd of September, 1503, quoted by Gregorovius, "Lucrezia Borgia," doc. 49 Afterwards the remains of Alexander VI. were transferred from the Crypt of the Vatican to San Giacomo degli Spagnuoli, and then to Santa Maria di Monserrato, where they repose with those of Calixtus III., behind the high altar, with no inscription over them. And even the memorial slab, placed in Santa Maria del Popolo over the burial-place of Vannozza and her children, was also removed.

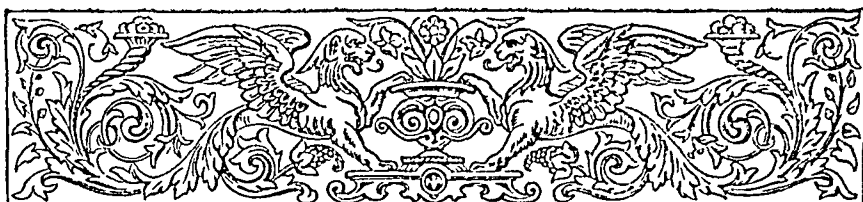
[3] Giovio declares that the Cardinal told him that he believed his illness to have been caused by poison given to him by the Borgia. Still Giovio's assertions are not always to be credited, and besides, when all were suggesting poison, the Cardinal may easily have attributed his illness to that cause, without any foundation for his belief.

There could be no longer any doubt as to the result of the new election, for all had been arranged by bribes, promises, intrigues of every kind, even with Spanish Cardinals, on the part of Valentinois, who had thus secured himself valid protection. On the 31st of October thirty-five cardinals took their seats in conclave, and hardly were they assembled, hardly indeed had the doors been closed according to custom, than the new Pope was already chosen in the person of Giuliano delle Rovere, who took the name of Julius II. This bitterest enemy of the Borgia—whom, however, he had favoured when finding it expedient—was a native of Savona, of low origin, and now of sixty years of age; but he came of the robust race of Pope Sixtus IV., who was his uncle; he had been a Cardinal since 1471, was the holder of many fat bishoprics, and possessed an iron constitution. Although his youth had been passed much as that of other prelates of those times, and although a man of few scruples, he showed a zeal and daring marvellous for one of his years, in forwarding the power and political grandeur of the Church. Without neglecting his own family, he never subordinated to their interests the needs of Church or State, and therefore indulged in no excess of nepotism His views, his ambitions, his violent impetuosity of character, were all totally contrary to those of the Borgia Yet, when necessary, he was able to feign and dissimulate, and had had no scruples in bargaining for his election with Valentinois, by promising him the post of Gonfaloniere of the Church and government of Romagna, as well as to give his daughter in marriage to Francesco Maria della Rovere, Prefect of Rome: but although not deliberately determined to violate these promises, he had but little intention of keeping them All depended upon his seeing whether the Duke might or might not be—at least for a time—a useful instrument in forwarding the Pope's design of driving the Venetians from Romagna, whither they were advancing. Sooner or later the Duke would have to give up the fortresses still holding out for him—notwithstanding all promises and hopes—since the general interest of the Church must not yield to any human consideration. On these points the resolutions of Julius II. were already taken, and, with his obstinacy of character, nothing could now induce him to change them. Hence the position of affairs

St Peter in warfare, nor on bastards, nor other people." Such was the credit then enjoyed by the Pontiffs. This Sigismondo, a native of Castiglione Aretino, made citizen of Sienna in 1842, was the author of various histories written in Latin, and still unpublished. This letter has been published in Sienna by the Ancora Printing Press, 1877, on the occasion of the marriage of Professor Enea Piccolomini, by Signor Giuseppe Palmieri Nuti.

Cardinal de Rouen, one of the aspirants to the Papacy. On the 3rd of September a solemn funeral service was performed in honour of the dead Pope; and on the 22nd, Francesco Todeschini dei Piccolomini, nephew of Pius II., was finally elected; and assumed the name of Pius III. He was sixty-four years of age, and so hopeless an invalid, that his pontificate resembled that of a passing shadow, only serving as it were for the continuance of the intrigues going on on all sides, and to give the various parties already at work time to measure their strength for the next election. The French army, which had halted, pursued its march immediately the new Pope was proclaimed; and the Duke, afraid to stay alone with his followers at Nepi, which, Alviano, thirsting for blood and vengeance, was preparing to attack, immediately returned to Rome There he learnt that the cities once his, were recalling their former lords and welcoming them with open arms. Romagna, however, having been better governed, still remained faithful, and the strongholds under Spanish commandants, still held out for him. Yet he never thought of placing himself at the head of his little army, and cutting his way through his enemies, to reconquer and defend his own state by force of arms. He hoped always and only in the intrigues which were to render the next Papal election favourable to his views; and the present Pope, a man of very gentle temper, showed him compassion for the time. But meanwhile the Orsini, hearing that he had gone over to the French, and had been accepted by them, were greatly enraged, and instantly concluded an alliance with the Colonna, Gonsalvo, and Spain. Some of them attacked the Borgo, and set fire to the Torrione gate, in order to enter the Vatican and seize Borgia, whom they pursued with great fury. He barely escaped by the aid of certain of the Cardinals, who hurried him away down the narrow passage communicating with the castle of St. Angelo. Thus in the very place where so many of his own and his father's victims had expired in the agonies of poison, Valentinois now found himself almost a captive. While here he learnt that Pius III, who could not stand upright on the 8th of October, the day of his coronation, had breathed his last ten days later.[1]

[1] In a letter dated 8th of November, 1503, signed *Sigismundus doctor et clericus senensis*, and addressed to Alessandro Piccolomini, nephew of Pius III., the writer, after lauding the Pope's goodness, says, that "he could not have died at a better moment than now when just exalted to that felicity, and before anything had occurred to mar it; for such could not have failed to happen. . . . He has committed no simony; he has made no war against Christians; he has done no murders, nor hangings, nor executions; he has not squandered the patrimony of



CHAPTER VII.

The Florentines show themselves hostile to the Venetians—Legation to Rome—The Spaniards are victorious in Naples—Second legation to France—Renewal of the war with Pisa—Fruitless attempts to turn the course of the Arno—"First Decennale"—A lost manuscript.

(1503–1504.)



HILE the events just related were going on in Rome, the attention of Florence was directed to what was occurring in the States which had belonged to Valentinois and touched the frontiers of the Republic. It was especially necessary to prevent the advance of the Venetians, who still aspired to the *Monarchy of Italy.* Therefore Machiavelli, by command and in the name of the Ten, wrote to the Commissaries and Podestàs, bidding them second the designs of the Church, and either the return of former rulers, or even that of the Duke himself—according to the way events turned, whichever best served to close the door against Venice[1] Nor did the Ten neglect to take into consideration, whether it might not be possible to profit by the general turmoil to seize some neighbouring territory on their own account: this, however, was only to be done with extreme caution, and without exposing the Republic to dangerous consequences. Written instructions to this effect were sent to the Commissary Ridolfi regarding Citerna, Faenza, Forlì, with the declaration that to

[1] Circular of the 20th August, 1503, in the Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No 108, at sheet 129. Many more of Machiavelli's letters are to be found in the same file. We only quote those at sheets 136, 139, and 148.

was becoming more and more involved ; indeed with this pontificate, a new epoch began, not for Italy only, but for all Europe. On that account, the new legation of Machiavelli—who was at this juncture despatched to Rome—possesses great additional importance.



name of Florence, but altogether in the interest and service of France, to counterbalance the injury done to that power by the desertion of the Orsini, who, together with the Colonna, had joined Gonsalvo of Cordova immediately the French had accepted the friendship of Valentinois. As was natural, the Condotta was speedily arranged, and Baglioni prepared to start for Florence without delay to receive his money, for the Republic had pledged itself to pay to him the 60,000 ducats owing to France "in return for her protection."[1] And on this head, Machiavelli wrote of Baglioni that "he was like the other pillagers of Rome, who are thieves rather than soldiers, and whose services are sought for the sake of their names and influence, rather than for their valour, or the number of men at their command. Moved as they are by personal interests, the alliances they make only last till it suits their purpose to break them, and therefore all understanding these leaders only seek to prevent them from doing harm."[2] Fresh events soon occurred to change the aims and nature of this legation. Machiavelli arrived in Rome towards the close of the scandalous manœuvres, by which—according to the Venetian ambassador—votes were bought and sold, not for thousands, but for tens of thousands of ducats; "there is no longer any difference between the Papacy and the *Soldanate*, since *plus offerenti dabitur*."[3] Cardinal Giuliano delle Rovere had gained ground so rapidly, succeeding so well—as we have already noted—in winning the Spanish Cardinals, by means of promises held out to Valentinois, that he was now certain of success. But men's minds were still greatly agitated, and the city in so anarchical a condition that on the evening of the 31st of October, one of the Cardinal's attendants was accompanied to Machiavelli's dwelling by an escort of twenty armed men. Nevertheless on that same evening the Secretary wrote that the election was now assured. In fact, on the following day, the Conclave met, the new Pope was proclaimed, immediately took the name of Julius II, and without hesitation seized the reins of government with a firm hand. Thus it was no longer a question of collecting and transmitting intelligence regarding the Conclave; but two questions of much higher importance now arose. What did the Pope intend to do with Valentinois, to whom he had promised so much? What would be his attitude towards Venice, who already manifested her intention of marching into Romagna?

Two men were employed in studying these questions with the

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 83 and fol.
[2] Letter of the 29th October, 1503.
[3] Giustinian, despatch of the 19th October.

obtain the latter State, Florence would be willing to expend as much as 10,000 ducats. But they added as usual that, the Republic not being strong enough for daring enterprises, it would to necessary to favour whichever party—excepting the Venetians—had the best probability of success.[1] While they were discussing the propriety of taking possession of Forlì, Signor Antonio Ordelaffi entered that city, was well received by the inhabitants, and immediately declared that he relied upon the protection of the Florentines. The latter were now puzzled what course to adopt. They had no fitting excuse for refusing him their protection ; but did not feel sufficiently powerful to defend him against the Church and Valentinois, who might both probably attack him. At the same time Machiavelli wrote to the Commissary at Castro caro : "This arrival will raise the spirits of the men of Forlì, and the suspicions of the Duke's people. You must tell the former that we made him (Ordelaffi) come, the better to help him : the latter on the contrary must be told, that we summoned him for the Duke's advantage, to shut that door which was open to the Venetians, and to deprive them of a tool. And in this way you must trim matters, so that we may gain time. You must, however, manage this affair with dexterity and secrecy, colouring it in such wise that neither party may perceive that it is being tricked or circumvented."[2] It was this perpetual petty tergiversation that chiefly disgusted Machiavelli, and inspired him with an exaggerated admiration for the conduct of men like Valentinois, who, untroubled by scruples, either human or divine, went straight to the end they had in view.

By good fortune he was soon relieved from this torment, for on the 24th of October he received orders to go to Rome, with special instructions and letters of recommendation to many cardinals whom it was necessary that he should see, especially the Cardinal Soderini, then managing the principal affairs of the Republic, and by whose advice he was to be guided.[3]

He was the bearer of condolences on the death of Pius III. ; he was to collect as much intelligence as possible during the conclave, and—by means of the Cardinal de Rouen—conclude a Condotta with G. P. Baglioni. This Condotta was arranged in the

[1] Letter of the 25th August, *loc. cit.*, file 107, at sheet 136, and letter of the 12th September, at sheet 156

[2] Letter of the 5th October to Americo Antinori, file 107 at sheet 171.

[3] From the 28th August it had been determined that he should be sent to Rome, as is shown by the Registers of the Ten But he did not set out at that time ; and afterwards his mission was decided upon afresh The instructions given him and the letter to Cardinal Soderini are in the "Legazione" contained in vol. vi of the "Opere," p. 364 and fol.

of no small danger to the Republic. Besides, unlike Giustinian, he enjoyed few opportunities of approaching the Pope, and therefore ignored his real intentions towards a man whom he had greatly hated, but to whom he had promised much.

The importance of this Legation, so far as it touches the life of Machiavelli, proceeds from its shortly bringing him once more in contact with Valentinois, when fallen from the high estate in which he had first known him. The secretary now writes and speaks of him with an indifference and cold contempt which has scandalized many, who looked upon this not only as a flagrant contradiction of all that he had previously written of him; but also as a proof of a low nature, only capable of admiring successful prosperity and good luck, and ready to trample upon his hero, directly he saw him in the dust. This erroneous judgment, however, is nothing but the natural consequence of the previous blunder of giving to Machiavelli's admiration for Valentinois a significance and a value which it never possessed. Even if a brigand chief had had the daring and dexterity to upset a country and subject it to his rule, Machiavelli would have admired his ability and courage without taking alarm at any sanguinary and cruel action. Indeed the workings of his own fancy would have converted the object of his admiration into a sort of imaginary hero, while lauding Cæsar's prudence and *virtue*, in the sense in which the latter word was employed during the Italian Renaissance. This all came from the nature of his genius, the character of the times, and—it may be—the coldness of his heart, which, though certainly not bad, was not easily inflamed with any very ardent enthusiasm for goodness. Naturally enough, therefore, had he afterwards encountered the same brigand, fallen from his previous position into obscurity, and had beheld the *man* in all his immoral and repulsive monstrousness, Machiavelli, in pursuance of his customary impassable examination of reality, would have described and judged him in his true light, without any hesitation or fear of contradicting himself. And this was not very unlike his attitude with regard to Valentinois, therefore the contradiction lies, not in his judgment, but rather in that of individuals wishing to attribute to him opinions, virtues and vices which he never possessed.

Meanwhile many and various rumours were afloat as to the Pope's intentions respecting his given promises. He did not wish to keep them, but neither did he wish to pass for a perjurer—the very accusation so often hurled by him against the Borgia. And the Duke, on the other hand, wrote Machiavelli—"always transported by his daring confidence, believes that the words of

utmost diligence and penetration: Machiavelli and Giustinian. Naturally, however, the latter concerned himself much less than the former with the affair of Valentinois, whom his Republic had little occasion to fear. As soon as he had heard of the promises made to him by Delle Rovere, he had set about ascertaining the latter's intentions with great acuteness. And he had been told in reply: "See that the election be successful, and have no doubts. You behold the miserable state to which we have been reduced by the carrion Pope Alexander has left behind him, with this great crowd of cardinals. Necessity compels men to do that which they would not, so long as they are dependent upon others; but once freed, they then act in a different fashion."[1] After that, Giustinian required no more explanations, nor occupied himself any more with Valentinois, indeed, when repeatedly invited to visit him, he refused to go, in order, as he said, to avoid swelling the Duke's importance. On the other hand, he showed marvellous discretion and perseverance in scrutinizing the most secret ideas of the Pope touching the advance of the Venetians, and reported them to his government with a diligence surpassing description. He speedily discovered that the first symptoms of benevolence and the first waverings were mere illusions; that the Pope was resolved to risk his tiara and the peace of Europe in order to win back the territories which, in his opinion, appertained to the Church. Thus, before they were manifest to any other human eye, we may discern the germs of the League of Cambray in the despatches of the Venetian ambassador,[2] who in vain counselled prudence to his government, and in vain sought to calm the haughty and irritable spirit of the Pope. Very different, with regard to these affairs, was the position of Machiavelli. Above all else, the chief anxiety of the Florentines was to see Julius II. the declared enemy of the Venetians. The necessary reserve maintained by him on the first news of their advance, was not only interpreted by the Florentines as a sign of unpardonable coldness; but almost as a proof that he rejoiced at the event, and was perhaps acting in concert with Venice, in order thus to prevent the restoration of the Duke. Therefore the Ten urged Machiavelli to use every art to arouse jealousy and hatred towards Venice; but he was soon compelled to acknowledge that this was the easiest of matters, for the first symptoms of the Pope's passionate and deliberate indignation were not slow in breaking out. But he had to keep a vigilant eye upon Valentinois, who—had he gone to Romagna—must have passed through Tuscany, a circumstance

[1] Despatch of the 30th October, 1503.
[2] Despatch of the 6th November.

Modena into Romagna. His troops consisting of three hundred light horse and four hundred infantry, would pass through Tuscany, if he has the safe conduct of your Excellencies, of whom he now speaks with much affability. But who may count upon his friendship, especially now, that he himself seems hardly to know what he wishes? The Cardinal of Volterra has found him "changeable, irresolute, and suspicious, incapable of remaining firm to any conclusion; either because this be natural to him, or because these blows of misfortune have stupified him, and travail him inwardly as one unused to experience them." The Cardinal d'Elna[1] has said that "he thought him out of his mind, for he knew not himself what he desired to do, so involved and irresolute did he seem."[2]

Besides, the name of Valentinois was so detested by the mass of Florentine citizens, that, notwithstanding the recommendations—somewhat lukewarm, we must admit—of Cardinals Soderini and De Rouen,[3] when the proposal for the safe conduct was brought before the Council of Eighty, out of a hundred and ten votes, ninety were against it[4] And on learning this, his Holiness raised his head and told Machiavelli that it was best so, and that he was content; whereupon the latter wrote—one sees plainly that he wishes to be rid of him, without appearing to break faith with him, and therefore does not care in the least what others do against him.[5] Very different, of course, was the impression this made upon the mind of the Duke, who, the moment he saw Machiavelli, burst into fury, saying, that he had already sent on his troops, was himself about to take ship, and could not possibly wait. The orator tried to soothe him by promising to write to Florence, and suggested that the Duke should send one of his men there, which certainly would lead to some good arrangement. But what he really wrote to the Ten was, that he had said these things to pacify the Duke, and because the latter threatened to side with the Pisans, the Venetians, the devil himself, in order to

[1] Francesco Loris, bishop of Elna Often mentioned as d'Euna, d'Herina, d'Helna. For his true title see the "Dispacci" of A. Giustinian, vol. i. p. 247, note (1). [2] Letter of the 14th of November.

[3] The two letters of recommendation are in the "Opere," P. M., vol. iv. p. 349

[4] Letter of Buonaccorsi, dated 5th of November, 1503, "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii. No 21. On this subject, see too the letter of the Ten, "Opere," P. M, vol. iv. p. 361.

[5] Letter of the 18th of November. Giustinian wrote on the 17th of the same month—"The Pope is planning the Duke's destruction, but does not wish to appear in the matter." And on the 13th he added, that the Pope himself had said to him—"This Duke is so changeable and incomprehensible, that certainly we do not know how to assert anything respecting his affairs . . . let him go if he chooses, for we think that he will be stripped of everything."

others are more trustworthy than were his own, and that the promised marriage alliance must be maintained."[1] On the 5th of November came letters from the Ten telling of the revolt of Imola against Valentinois, and the advance of the Venetians towards Faenza Machiavelli conveyed this news to the Pope, who heard it unmoved, and then to several cardinals, to whom he remarked that if his Holiness followed this course, he would soon be no better than a Venetian chaplain. He then presented himself to the Duke, who was greatly agitated, and complained bitterly of the Florentines; he said that they might, with a hundred men, have saved him those States, and yet had not done so. Since Imola is lost, and Faenza attacked, he declares that he will no longer collect soldiers, nor be fooled by you. He will place all that remains to him in the hands of the Venetians In this way he believes that he shall soon witness the destruction of your State, and will exult over it, for the French have too much to do in the kingdom of Naples, to be able to assist you "And he enlarged upon these points with poisoned and passionate words. I had no lack of things to say in reply, nor would my words have failed me; yet I took the course of trying to pacify him, and took leave of him as quickly as possible, for it seemed a thousand years till I could quit his presence."[2] The situation was now entirely changed; the Duke had no longer the power to enforce his commands, and Machiavelli was conscious of his own superiority over his interlocutor, who in old times had seemed so much greater than he.

We now see Rome the centre of the chief affairs of the world; of those between France and Spain, the most important of all; the concerns of Romagna; the warfare of the barons. But the Pope, equally indebted to all for his election, and not having as yet collected either men or money cannot decide which to favour. "He is of necessity compelled to veer with the wind until change of times and circumstances force him to declare himself, or until he be so firmly fixed in his seat, as to be able to favour or carry out any undertaking that is to his mind." No one understands what he means to do with Valentinois; he presses him to depart, he has written and caused others to write to your Excellencies, to grant him a safe conduct, but he does not at all care that he should really obtain it.[3] The Duke is preparing to take the road by Porto Venere or Spezia, and thence by the Garfagnana and

[1] Letter of the 4th of November.

[2] This letter has no date, and is the ix. of this Legation, "Opere," vol. vi. p 388

[3] Letter of the 11th of November.

not press matters to a conclusion. It is believed, however, that whether he have the sureties or not, D'Oviedo will set out to-morrow; and thus it would seem that little by little this Duke is slipping into his grave."[1]

It is useless now to waste time in relating how D'Oviedo set out; how he came to his death in Romagna, hanged by one of the commandants of the fortresses who would not surrender, because his master was in the power of the Pope; how the Pope finally obtained the fortresses, and Valentinois, deserted by all, went to Naples where he was seized by Gonsalvo dei Cordova, and sent a prisoner to Spain. All these are things generally known, and besides would lead us too far astray from the subject of our narrative. Instead, it is only necessary to record one last circumstance, very typical of the Duke's behaviour at this period, and throwing a new light upon his character. He had repeatedly implored as "a special grace" an interview with Duke Guidobaldo, who had then come to Rome from Urbino, and was on very good terms with the Pope At first this nobleman—remembering how iniquitously he had been in former days driven from his dominions by the Borgia, and with what fury they had sought to hunt him down, refused the request; but finally yielded to the intercessions of his Holiness. We are told by an eye-witness that Valentinois entered cap in hand, and twice bent his knees to the ground in advancing towards Duke Guidobaldo, who was sitting upon a species of couch in the pontifical ante-chamber. On seeing his old adversary in this attitude of humility, he left his seat, stirred by a sentiment of dignity and almost of self-respect, with his own hands assisted Borgia to rise, and made him sit down by his side. Thereupon Valentinois humbly besought forgiveness for the past, "laying the blame upon his youth, his evil counsellors, his bad companions, the abominable disposition of the Pope and of some others who had urged him to that undertaking, entering into many details concerning the Pope, and cursing his memory." He promised to restore all the stolen property, excepting a few brocaded robes, given to the Cardinal of Rouen, and certain other things which he no longer possessed. Guidobaldo replied with a few courteous words, but of such a nature that Borgia "remained much abased and understood his position."[2] Nevertheless he continued to bear himself towards all with the same abject servility, as may be seen from the continuation of the narrative we quote, and from

[1] Letter of the 3rd December.

[2] This most important letter was discovered and published by Ugolini in his "Storia dei Duchi d'Urbino," vol ii. p. 523 The date of the day is wanting, as it is only described: *Dat: Roma* v. . . . 1503.

injure Florence. "When his messenger arrives, your Excellencies can neglect him and arrange about him as you will judge best. As to the troops which have already set out, namely, one hundred men-at-arms, and two hundred and fifty light horse, you can try to be informed of their movements, so as to have them disarmed and stripped at the first convenient opportunity." [1]

Valentinois started for Ostia with four or five hundred men, according to public rumour, which also swelled to seven hundred horse the cavalry on the road to Tuscany.[2] These had been already preceded by the Bishop of Veroli, who had arrived in Florence with a letter of recommendation signed by Cardinal Soderini, and written by Machiavelli,[3] who instantly despatched another one to explain that the first was nothing but a *ruse* to soothe the Duke and send him quietly away. They could act as they pleased with regard to the letter.[4]

Now, however, affairs were becoming complicated, for news arrived that the Venetians had taken Faenza, and soon after, that they had annexed Rimini by agreement with Malatesta. Upon this, Machiavelli, in language that may truly be called prophetic, wrote that this expedition of the Venetians "will either be the gate opening all Italy to them, or prove to be their ruin." [5] Here in fact was the germ of the future league of Cambray. The Cardinal de Rouen, terribly enraged, swore on his soul that if the Venetians threatened Florence, the king would put aside all else to help them; the Pope declared that if the Venetians persevered in their present course of action, he would join with France, with the Emperor, with any one, to achieve their downfall, as in fact he afterwards did.[6]

Meanwhile the Pope was unable to restrain himself any longer, although he had permitted Valentinois to go to Ostia, without

[1] Letter of the 18th of November. [2] Letter of the 19th of November.

[3] This is in vol. vi. of the "Opere," p. 430, note.

[4] Letter of the 20th of November.

[5] Letter of the 24th of November.

[6] Letter of the 21st of November. In the following letter Machiavelli asks the Ten for money, and goes through his accounts. On starting he had received thirty-three ducats He spent thirteen in travelling post, eighteen upon a mule, eighteen upon a velvet habit, eleven on a Catalan cloak, ten upon a loose robe, making a total of seventy ducats. He was living at an inn with two men and a mule, spending ten *carlini* a-day. Although the Ten had granted him the salary he had demanded, yet he was not then aware of the dearth of provisions in Rome. Therefore he now asked to be reimbursed for his travelling expenses, according to the usual custom. This request was granted. In fact there exists in the Florentine Archives an order of payment dated 3rd of January, 1503 (1504), in which it is stated that, Machiavelli having been granted a salary of ten lire a-day—his usual stipend included, a sum of 300 lire was owing to him from the 23rd of

called the rout of Garigliano, which took place at the end of December and was a downright catastrophe for the French. Their army was dispersed and destroyed; their best captains either killed, taken, or put to flight; the whole of the kingdom was now in the hands of the Spaniards. Among the many different news daily reaching Florence, there was one item that gladdened the whole city: Piero dei Medici, who was with the French army, had been drowned in the Garigliano, while trying to cross it in a boat. However, the knowledge that there was nothing more to be feared from this hated and despised tyrant, was but a slight compensation for the fresh perils now menacing the Republic, which had been the constant ally of France. Many already fancied that they beheld the great Captain Gonsalvo on the march towards Lombardy at the head of his victorious army, to drive the French altogether out of Italy. And what then would be the fate of Florence? Gonsalvo was known to be favourable to the Pisans, what therefore must be his sentiments towards France's most faithful ally throughout the Peninsula?

For these reasons, Machiavelli had hardly resumed his official duties in Florence, than he was despatched to France, where Niccolò Valori was already resident ambassador. His instructions, dated 14th of January, 1504, written in his own hand and signed by Marcello Virgilio, ran as follows: "You will go to Lyons, present yourself to Valori and the King, explain to them the position of affairs here, see for yourself the preparations being made by the French, and write to us quickly of all these things, giving your own judgment concerning them. And should the preparations seem insufficient to you, you will make it clearly to be understood that we are not in a position to gather troops sufficient for our defence, and that accordingly we should be obliged to turn for aid wherever it was to be found, since nought else is ours but this small liberty, that we must use every effort to preserve. Nor will you content yourself with great promises and designs, but also make it understood that immediate and effective aid is what is required." Besides this, Baglioni's Condotta having been broken off, he was to try to effect something towards settling that business likewise.

Machiavelli set out without delay, and on the 22nd of January, 1504, wrote from Milan that the Lord of Chaumont did not believe that Gonsalvo would advance, and declared that in every event the King would know how to defend his friends, that he would write to beg his Majesty to conclude Baglioni's Condotta and that meanwhile the Republic should exert itself to come to friendly terms with "the small coin of Italy;" as to the Venetians,

the despatches of the various Italian ambassadors in Rome. Can we then be surprised that Machiavelli should now feel the utmost personal contempt for Valentinois, and almost endeavour to hide the present spectacle from his mind in order not to lose remembrance of the observations and ideas which had previously occurred to him?

At this juncture the Legation may almost be said to be at an end. Machiavelli lingered in Rome a few days longer, prevented from starting by a cough then prevalent, and by the solicitations of Cardinal Soderini, who was very unwilling to part with him. During this interval he continued to forward the news that he collected day by day. He reported the arrest of the secretary who had poisoned his employer, Cardinal Michiel, by order of Pope Alexander VI., and who would—it was said—be burnt alive in public.[1] He also continued as before to give the current news of the war in the kingdom of Naples, and having written some other particulars about Valentinois, who was now treated as a prisoner, he sent off his last letter in date of the 16th of December, and started for Florence, bearing one from the Cardinal Soderini, who praised him most highly to the Republic as a man of unrivalled good faith, diligence, and prudence.[2]

During his stay in Rome Machiavelli had always sent uncertain and contradictory news of the war then going on between the Spaniards and the French, who were encamped in the marshes on either side of the Garigliano and exposed to continual rains. In fact, up to the time of his departure, nothing very decisive had taken place, and the most contradictory rumours were afloat. But hardly had he reached Florence, than news came of what was

[1] Letter of the 14th December. On the 17th Giustinian wrote the same intelligence.

[2] It is in the vol. vi. of the "Opere," in the note at p. 494. Among the other letters of this Legation, there is one in the "Opere," marked xlii., addressed to a Florentine citizen, in a private manner. In this Machiavelli writes that he can only repeat in homely fashion the things already written officially: "I will speak in the vulgar tongue, even if I have written to the Office grammatically; though I doubt if I have done so." This is generally believed to have been addressed to Soderini, but as is justly remarked by Signor Nitti (*op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 261), the form is much too familiar for this to be probable. Nitti believes it to have been written to a Messer Tucci, one of the Signory, and who—according to a letter of Buonaccorsi, dated 4th December—had been much vexed that Machiavelli had not replied to him; nor is this an improbable supposition, for in this letter the secretary makes excuses for his silence. Besides, this point is of no importance. We would merely observe that the phrase, *writing in the vulgate and not in grammar*, has not the angry meaning given to it by Signor Nitti, and that, in writing to one of the *Signoria*, the secretary would not, as he supposes, have made use of "sharp and cutting words." The letter of Buonaccorsi alluded to by Signor Nitti, is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii. No. 26.

guard against the Siennese[1] And as usual he was instructed to study carefully the tendencies of the Lord of Piombino and all those about him, in order to bring full reports of these matters on his return, which he accordingly did. And after this the business of the Chancery became brisker than ever, for the war with Pisa was resumed with fresh energy.

Meanwhile Soderini, now sure of his ground, began to rule in his own way, and Machiavelli, having great ascendency over him, seconded his efforts, the better to preserve his own influence. The office of Gonfaloniere for life, took all importance from others held for very brief terms, and these were therefore filled by men of little weight, who left more and more untrammelled the authority of chief magistrate of the State, whose economical administration—as contrasted with the former reckless squandering—had gained him the confidence even of the most prudent. Therefore Soderini had all his own way in the Pratica, the Eighty, and even in the Great Council, although certain grave jealousies had arisen against him and also against Machiavelli, in whom he reposed the fullest confidence[2] Condotte were concluded with G. P. Baglioni, Marcantonio Colonna, and other captains of more or less renown, for fifty, for one hundred or more men-at-arms a-piece. Three thousand foot soldiers were hired to lay waste[3] the enemies' territory.

The commissary was Giacomini who quickly commenced operations. In May he made a raid upon San Rossore, devastating it entirely in four days; he did the same in the Val di Serchio,

identical with the third letter of the *Legazione all' Imperatore*, which took place in 1507.

Another of Niccolò Valori's letters ("Carte del Machiavelli," case iii. No 63) leads Signor Nitti to a series of conjectures (*op. cit*, vol i. p 220, note 1) which seem to us of but little probability He considers it a proof that Machiavelli was working with Valori for the purpose of "reconstructing the former intimate union of the House of Borgia with the King of France." Machiavelli would have been following a policy of his own, had he and Valori tried to reconstruct an alliance, without any authorization to do so But the Secretary of the Ten could not take similar liberties. The mistake has arisen simply because it escaped observation that the date of the letter. Rouen, 7th of March, 1503, Florentine style, answers to the 7th of March, 1504, modern style. At that time Alexander VI. was dead, Valentinois had been arrested at Ostia, and was no longer of any importance. The letter was written by Valori, while Machiavelli was on his way back to Florence from France, and it alludes to certain affairs, to which he was to apply himself on the journey for the benefit of the Republic, in the name of the Gonfaloniere There is no mystery in the letter, and there is nothing in it concerning the Borgia.

[1] "Opere," vol vi p 564

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxviii.

[3] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," pp 88-89.

"they would be forced to attend to their fisheries" Others, on the contrary, assured Machiavelli that the King of France had exhausted his finances, had few troops, and those few scattered over many places, whereas "the enemies were in the saddle, fresh and ready for victory."[1] On the 26th he reached Lyons, and on the 27th, together with Valori, he waited on the Cardinal of Rouen, and spoke very earnestly to him on the state of affairs and the necessity of prompt and energetic measures. The replies he received were too vague to be satisfactory; but all of a sudden some of the clouds began to clear away from the gloomy horizon. Although Spain had obtained an extraordinary victory, she was not intoxicated by her good fortune, and sought rather to consolidate her recent conquests, than to engage in new and perilous enterprises. She therefore lent a willing ear to the proposals of truce made to her by the French, and as they could not exclude the Florentines from the agreement, the dangers threatening the Republic suddenly disappeared. In fact, a three years' truce was signed at Lyons on the 11th of February. The Spaniards were now masters of the Neapolitan kingdom, friendly relations were temporarily established between the two potentates, and the Florentines were included in the treaty as friends of France. Valori quickly informed the Ten of this, and Machiavelli was able to prepare for his departure. On the 25th of February he wrote that the moment news of the truce arrived he leapt into the saddle to return home. However, his departure was deferred for a few days owing to some small business that had to be done for Valori, who held him in the greatest esteem, commended to the Ten his zeal and intelligence, corresponded with and frequently made use of him. And as Valori thereafter pursued his diplomatic correspondence unaided, we only find three of Machiavelli's letters in this Legation, and of these the only noteworthy one is that written from Milan.[2]

Having returned to Florence, he was sent on the 2nd of April to Piombino to carry to the Lord of that place assurances of sincere friendship on the part of the Republic, and to put him on his

[1] Letter of the 22nd January, 1450, from Milan.

[2] Signor Gaspar Amico, at p 182 of his work, "La vita di Niccolò Machiavelli" (Florence, Civelli, 1875), mentions a hitherto unknown journey of Machiavelli to France, in the January of 1502, and in confirmation of it quotes a letter, which he believes to be inedited, of Francesco Vettori, dated the 17th of January of that year, from Pulsano This letter, however, which is at sheet 83, not 8, of the Codex quoted by him (Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 4, No 92), is written from Bulsano (Bolzano), and bears the date, not of the 17th January, 1502, but of the 17th January, 1507, when Vettori was ambassador to the Emperor. It has also escaped Signor Amico's notice, that the letter published by him is

then nothing would be accomplished.[1] Giacomini while declaring his readiness—as duty required to execute the orders received—added: "Your Excellencies will find that fresh difficulties will daily arise, and the work prove to be less easy than it now seems."[2] He too saw nothing in the project but huge loss of time and money, and the necessity of guarding the workmen, without being able to perform any military operation. And being a man of small patience, he very soon made the fever from which he was in reality suffering, a pretext for requesting his dismissal on the 15th of September It was granted to him on the following day, and the Ten chose Tommaso Tosinghi as his successor.[3]

Machiavelli meanwhile was employed in writing an interminable series of letters to direct the works. All the Communes received orders to supply the camp with a quantity of sappers to dig the trenches; soldiers were ordered to mount guard to defend the works; master carpenters were sent to construct the dam; engineers were summoned from Ferrara: the labour went on unceasingly.[4] The excavation of the two canals which had to be seven *braccia* deep, and one of them twenty, the other thirty *braccia* wide, went forward rapidly; but more rapidly still the expenditure, since with thousands of men employed night and day, not half the task was accomplished. Worse still, grave doubts soon arose as to the success of the undertaking; for, during a flood, the water being turned into the first trench, which was now completed, it all ran back into the Arno, the moment the flood subsided.[5] It was asserted that the dam, by arresting the course of the river, would raise the level of its bed; but it was soon found, that, as it was built slowly, the narrowing of the bed increased the force of the current and again deepened the bed.

[1] Among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case vi. No 78, there is a report of the whole of this affair drawn up by Buonaccorsi. Bentivoglio declared the undertaking impossible, because, according to him, the gradient was slighter in the direction of the lake, than along the present course of the river. "These reasons are all palpable and infallible," concludes Buonaccorsi, "yet they were not admitted. Every man is enlightened by experience."

[2] Letter of Giacomini to the Ten, dated 25th of August, 1504. "Archivio Storico," vol. xv. p. 296 Nardi says in his "Vita di A. Giacomini": "The which work was entrusted to Antonio, and he had it carried on with all diligence and solicitude, although approved neither by him nor Messer Ercole Bentivoglio, for they judged it a useless expense and labour"

[3] This letter too of Giacomini is published in the "Archivio Storico," vol. xv. p. 306; his permission to retire, and the announcement of Tosinghi's nomination are in the Florence Archives, cl. x dist. 3, No 113, at sheet 125*t*.

[4] See Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 112, at sheets 94, and 103*t*, and No. 113, at sheet 96*t*. These two files are full of Machiavelli's letters on the deviation of the Arno.

[5] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 93 and fol.

and instantly afterwards captured Librafatta. Three galleys were hired, which proved very useful in cutting off the enemy's supplies, and meanwhile he made several forays into the dominion of Lucca as a reprisal for the succour which that State was continually sending to the Pisans. On the 1st of July communications from the Ten were forwarded to him by Machiavelli, congratulating him on what he had already accomplished, and exhorting him to make the Lucchese clearly understand his resolve that for the future they should not help the Pisans with "so much as a glass of water; and that being aware that their (the Pisans') life is kept in their body by the Lucchese, you have firmly decided that this shall happen no more, even if you have to pursue them within the walls of Lucca."[1]

All this, however, was nothing unusual. But now Soderini had conceived a very unfortunate idea, that both he and Machiavelli followed with extravagant ardour, against the advice of all competent persons. This was nothing less than of altering the course of the Arno, and by turning it into a lake near Leghorn, leave Pisa without a river, and robbed of all communication with the sea. The engineers who were consulted stated that with two thousand workmen and a certain quantity of timber, it would be possible to construct a dam, which would stop the course of the river, and, by means of two trenches dug for the purpose, direct it into the lake, and thence to the sea. "Thirty or forty thousand days' work would suffice," *i.e.*, two thousand men might accomplish it in fifteen days. When the question was laid before the Ten in the Pratica, they refused to agree to it, considering it "little better than a fantasy."[2] But the Gonfaloniere used so many means to carry his project that at last he succeeded, and obtained the decree for its execution.

On the 20th of August Niccolò Machiavelli wrote a long letter to Giacomini, informing him of the resolution passed, and directing him to set about the necessary measures for carrying it out, in conjunction with Giuliano Lapi and Colombino, who were sent to him expressly for that purpose.[3] Neither Bentivoglio nor Giacomini believed in the feasibility of the project. The first demonstrated, pen in hand, that it being necessary to excavate 800,000 *braccia* square of soil, two thousand workmen would have to be employed for at least two hundred days, and that even

[1] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 113, folio 32.

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap. xxviii p. 315.

[3] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 112, folio 89*t*: Appendix, document viii.

It was precisely at this period that Machiavelli began to write the first verses that we have from his pen, the "Decennale Primo,"[1] which he composed in a fortnight, and dedicated to Alamanno Salviati in a letter of the 9th of November, 1504[2] This work cannot be styled genuine poetry, for it consists of a simple historic account of events occurring in Italy during the decade commencing in the year 1494. The narrative flows on rapidly enough in simple and easy *terzine*, it dwells on none but the most important events, yet does not neglect anything worthy of note, especially with reference to the history of Florence. And from time to time some flash of bitter irony enlivens the poem with its pungent wit, and is in marked contrast with the expressions of real sorrow, escaping the author with equal frequency.

He invokes the aid of the muse in narrating the miseries which began for Italy when she once more allowed her soil to be trampled by barbaric hordes. The French, obeying the call of Italian internal discord, overrun the Peninsula, without encountering any resistance. At Florence alone they are withstood by the daring of Piero Capponi :—

> "Lo strepito dell' armi e de' cavalli
> Non potè far che non fosse sentita
> La voce d' un Cappon fra cento Galli."[3]

Yet when they are compelled to retreat from Italy, and pass the Taro, after repulsing the army of the League, Florence cannot bear to withdraw from her alliance with them, and "waits on with open beak till some one shall cross the Alps to bring her manna in the desert." But soon she found that she was deceived, for enemies encompassed her on all sides, and threatened her very existence ; especially when she allowed herself to be "dominated and divided by the doctrines of that great Savonarola, who, filled with divine virtue, fascinated her by his words." Nor could she ever again have been united,

> "Se non cresceva o se non era spento
> Il suo lume divin con maggior foco."

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great a fallacy, for it seems impossible that it should not be the fault of those engineers who blundered so grossly. Perhaps too this may be the pleasure of the Almighty for some better end unknown to ourselves." "Carte del Machiavelli," case iii No 58.

[1] "Opere," vol. v pp. 351–73. [2] Ibid. at p. 355.

[3] The sense of which may be roughly rendered—

> "For still amid the clang of arms, amid the clash of horse,
> Rose 'mid a hundred Gallic *crows* one Capon's stirring voice."
>
> *Translator.*

Then it was thought that this inconvenience would cease as soon as the work was completed, and meanwhile the soldiers had to waste their time guarding the labourers. Nevertheless Soderini would not allow that he was beaten, and having carried the matter first before the Pratica, and then before the Council of Eighty, obtained a decree for the continuance of the work, and wrote to that effect to Tosinghi on the 28th and 29th of September.[1] Soon they had to be content with the hope that the seven thousand ducats already granted might not have been spent in vain, and that the trenches already dug might serve at least to check the advance of the Pisans, and lay the country under water.[2] A proclamation was issued, and read beneath the walls of Pisa, setting forth that the Signory had obtained from the Great Council the privilege of granting a free pardon to all who would leave that city and declare themselves obedient subjects of the Republic.[3] But this measure too failed in its purpose, for instead of reducing the strength of the enemy, its sole effect was to enable the Pisans to rid themselves of useless persons, while provisions were scarce. Some too, by leaving the city, regained possession of their lands, and then clandestinely returned. It was therefore necessary to publish fresh orders to prevent the benevolent clauses of the proclamation from defeating the main object of it.[4]

Disasters multiplied in these days. The ships hired to watch the coast had already been wrecked, with a loss of eighty lives; the soldiery showed increasing discontent; the labourers deserted as soon as the rainy season set in.[5] And although the new engineers from Ferrara, after consultation with those in the camp, did not altogether despair of the enterprise, yet on the 12th of October it was left to Tosinghi's decision whether it should be continued, or whether it would be best to pay off the army and suspend everything; the which meant that Florence had lost all hope of being able to go on. Shortly afterwards, in fact, Tosinghi was recalled, and a successor sent to replace him; the army was disbanded, and the trenches made at so enormous a labour and expense, were hastily filled up by the Pisans. And such was the end of this unlucky undertaking.[6]

[1] Florence Archives, cl x. dist. 3, No. 113, at sheets 152 and 154. See in Appendix, document ix, the first of these two letters

[2] *Loc. cit.*, No. 113, at sheet 147*t*.

[3] This proclamation is to be found in *loc cit*, No. 112, at sheet 156, Appendix, document x. See also Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxviii pp 314-15.

[4] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist 3, No 112, at sheet 160*t*.

[5] *Loc. cit*, at sheet 157*t*.

[6] On the 26th of October, 1504, Cardinal Soderini wrote to Machiavelli from Rome. "Much have we been grieved that this water plan should have proved so

native Florence. The author begins by deploring the cruc wounds inflicted upon Italy by foreigners, and longs for power t heal them; but his hatred for Venice, Pisa, and other neigh bouring states speedily breaks forth. He frequently recurs to hi first grief; but the closing idea of the canto is dedicated t Florence, not to Italy. The last verse refers to the idea whic he had long been turning over in his mind, *i.e.*, of saving th Republic, by arming it in its own defence. This conflict betwee scepticism and political earnestness, between irony and genuin grief, between national and municipal feeling, is to be met wit throughout the Italian Renaissance, and in no one is it bett personified than in Machiavelli, especially during these yea when—unable to devote himself to serious and prolonged study- he threw his ideas upon paper just as they occurred to him.

The "Primo Decennale" was only printed in the beginnin of 1506 by means of one of Machiavelli's coadjutors in th Chancery,[1] and almost at the same time an illegal reprint it was made without the author's knowledge; it was quick circulated among his friends and read with great avidity, bu nevertheless, did not much serve to the increase of his reput tion. One noteworthy letter, however, was addressed to him the 25th February, 1506, by Signor Ercole Bentivoglio, to who he had sent a copy of his work, and who was then at Cascina the service of the Republic. This correspondent, after thankin Machiavelli, exalts the art, with which all the principal events the decade were gathered into so small a space, without a matter of importance being omitted. He urged him to contin the work, "for although these times have been, and still are, full of wretchedness, that any record of them renews and increas our many sufferings, still it is grateful to us to know that a tr written version of these things will go down to those who co after us, who, therefore, knowing our evil fate in these days, w not accuse us of wilfully neglecting to maintain the honour a reputation of Italy." "He who has not read the history of the times," says Bentivoglio, in conclusion, "could not believe how

[1] The first edition, prepared in February, 1506, by Agostino Vespucci, bore following title:—"Nicolai Malciavelli florentini, compendium rerum decen in Italiam gestarum ad viros florentinos, incipit feliciter." It was counterfei twenty days later, and Vespucci brought an action before the Eight, and speaks it in a letter to Machiavelli, also adding that the magistrates, not knowing "y fable singer," he had gone out to have ten copies handsomely bound, so as present one to each magistrate, and to two other citizens. The letter is dated 1 March, 1506, and was published by Passerini, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p This most rare edition, without date of time or place, was assigned by Libri to year 1504; but Vespucci's letter, in our opinion, removes all doubt.

Then follow the misfortunes of the war in the Casentino and the war with Pisa, and here Machiavelli plainly alludes to the treachery of Paolo Vitelli, "cause of so much ill." And he goes on to recall the Lombard wars and the rebellion of Arezzo, *à propos* to which he praises somewhat too highly the prudence and virtue of Piero Soderini, who was then Gonfaloniere, though not for life. He next describes the events in Romagna, representing Valentinois and his captains as so many venomous serpents tearing each other to pieces tooth and nail. The Duke is the basilisk among them, who, by the sweetness of his whistling, entices them into his den and destroys them. And while once more the French descend into Italy to renew their Neapolitan expedition, "the glorified spirit of Pope Alexander is borne amid the souls of the blessed, closely followed by his three inseparable handmaidens—lust, cruelty, and simony." Julius II. was then elected "doorkeeper to Paradise;" the French were defeated and Borgia at last received from the Pope and Gonsalvo the merited chastisement of his iniquities.

Towards the conclusion of the Decennale Machiavelli again resuming his gravity says that—for ten years the sun has shone upon these horrible deeds which have stained the world with blood. "Now Phœbus redoubles his coursers' rations, for speedily other events will happen, compared with which all that has passed shall seem as nothing. Fortune is not yet content; the end of the Italian wars not yet at hand. The Pope seeks to regain the dominions of the Church; the Emperor wishes to be crowned; France laments the blow she has received; Spain spreads nets for her neighbours, in order to keep firm hold of that which she has seized; Florence wants Pisa; Venice oscillates between the dictates of her timidity and lust of fresh conquests; so that it is easily to be seen that the new flame, once kindled, will soar to heaven itself. My mind is divided betwixt hope and fear,

"'Tanto che si consuma a dramma a dramma,'

for fain would I know into what port the tiny bark of our Republic will run. My whole faith is in its dexterous steersman; but the course would be far easier and shorter if the Florentines re-opened the temple of Mars."

Throughout this work we find a strange and continual contrast. Not only—as we have already observed—do we see a stinging, sometimes almost cynical irony joined to a profound sorrow for the miseries of Italy; but likewise a very lively sentiment of national unity, together with a still livelier affection for his



CHAPTER VIII.

Sad condition of Umbria—Legation to Perugia—War perils—New Legation to Sienna—Defeat of Alviano—The Florentines attack Pisa, and are repulsed—Legation to the Court of Julius II.—Institution of the Florentine Militia.

(1505–1507.)



OWARDS the end of 1504 the prospects of the Republic were exceedingly gloomy. Bartolommeo d'Alviano had parted from Gonsalvo dei Cordova in high discontent, and it was said that he intended to attempt some expedition on his own account in Central Italy. He was seconded by the Vitelli, the Orsini, the lords of Piombino and Sienna, and, what was still worse, it appeared that even G. P. Baglioni, although the paid Captain of the Florentines, was also in agreement with him For this General remained at Perugia, without renewing the Condotta, which had now expired, and replied evasively, or not at all, to the official letters despatched to him [1] Neither at Leghorn nor Pisa were things going on well,[2] and at the end of March, 1505, there was an encounter on the bridge of Cappellese, on the river Osole, between a considerable number of Pisans and Florentines, in which the latter were utterly routed, chiefly owing to the negligence of their commanders Naturally, the Republic complained bitterly of this defeat,[3] and after sending supplies of money to refit the camp, began to take thought for the future. The first measure adopted

[1] Letter of the 9th December, in the Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 113, at sheet 211*t*. In files 114 and 116 there are many of Machiavelli's letters relating to events narrated in this chapter.

[2] Specially noteworthy is the letter to the Captain of Leghorn. Florence Archives, file 116, at sheet 23, Appendix, document xi.

[3] Florence Archives, cl x. dist 3, No. 116, at sheets 69 and 70.

so short a space of time Italy could have fallen from such a height of prosperity to such an abyss of ruin, towards which even the little that remains to us seems to rush as towards a desired end, unless he who saved the people of Israel from Pharaoh should unexpectedly come to our rescue."[1] This is certainly strange language from a free captain ; but such were the times, such the general anxiety felt in Italy.

It would seem that Machiavelli frequently amused himself at this period by mingling irony and satire with his official daily work and political meditations, for it was then that he must have composed a second literary work, which has unfortunately perished. This was an imitation of the Clouds and other comedies of Aristophanes, entitled "Le Maschere" (Masks). All that we know of it is that it was written at the instance of Marcello Virgilio, and, together with other papers and compositions of his, came into the hands of Giulian dei Ricci, who, though he had transcribed many other unpublished writings of his illustrious grandfather, declined to copy this, not only because it was reduced to barely legible fragments, but because the author had attacked in it, "under feigned names, many citizens who were still living in the year 1504" After which the same writer adds :—"In all his compositions Niccolò indulged in much license, as well in blaming great personages, lay and ecclesiastic, as in reducing all things to natural or fortuitous causes." Certainly this stinging satirical spirit of his procured him many enemies, and helped to embitter his life, but his persistency in reducing all facts to natural causes, although, as Ricci sadly remarks, it led to the interdiction of Machiavelli's works by Paul IV. and the Council of Trent, was likewise the source of his well-merited immortality.[2]

[1] This letter was published by Nitti, vol. i p. 301, note It is included among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No. 99

[2] See, in the Florence National Library, the "Priorista" of Ricci, Santo Spirito quarter, Machiavelli family, at sheet 161 and fol.



was to send Niccolò Machiavelli to Perugia, in order to discover Baglioni's real intentions.

It is difficult to conceive an exact idea of the anarchy then reigning throughout Umbria, above all in Perugia, and of the manner in which the Baglioni ruled that city. It was in a state of perpetual warfare. The neighbouring cities were swarming with refugees, among whom the Oddi took the first rank, and these from time to time made sudden forays into Perugia, and turned the streets into bloody battle grounds. When Pope Alexander VI., driven by fear of Charles VIII., came to Perugia in 1495, he tried to profit by the opportunity, and proposed to the Baglioni that they should organize some great festival, when he secretly hoped to entrap them all together in the same net. But Guido Baglioni replied, that the best of all festivals would be to show His Holiness the people in arms under the command of his relations, who were their leaders. Upon this, says Matarazzo, the chronicler, "His Holiness understood that Guido had salt in his brains," and insisted no further. Hardly had the Pope taken his departure, than the Baglioni were fighting—some of them in their shirts—through the streets of Perugia, having been assailed by the Oddi, who suddenly forced their way into the town by night, burst into their enemies' houses, and even attacked them in their beds. More than a hundred corpses lay scattered about the streets, or dangling by their necks from windows; blood ran in streams, and was—as the chronicler tells us—lapped up by dogs, and also by a tame bear that roamed freely about the city.[1] Yet at last the Baglioni were the victors.

Two years afterwards came Cardinal Borgia, commissioned by Rome to re-establish order in Umbria. All declared their obedience to the authority of the Pontiff, but added that they would rather raze their city to the ground than renounce their own vengeance. Wherefore the Cardinal wrote that it was impossible to come to any conclusion, unless men-at-arms were sent to him to combat "these demons who have no fear of holy water."[2] And when the Cardinal went away, without having accomplished anything, war broke out between the Baglioni

[1] Matarazzo, "Cronaca di Perugia, Archivio Storico Italiano," vol. xvi part II, p. 59

[2] His letters are in the Library of St. Mark at Venice "Epistolæ Variorum," vol ii cl x codex clxxvi The Cardinal writes in Italian, adding a few words in Spanish, as for instance · *Y no obezen perque son vilans i mala gent que volen lo bisto, y que quyls ha da governar los puga manar, que altrament no sen pot aver overa* (sic) And his usual mode of signature was: *De V. S. esclav y factura, qui los benerats pens li besa.*

el Cardinal de Boria.

the Colonna and the Savelli, were now in the service of the Republic, and that he added, that having had the terms of the Condotta examined by many learned doctors of Perugia, he was assured that the contract did not bind him to the service of the Florentines. I replied to him, writes Machiavelli, that, if so, worse might befall him than you, since if, by his fault, "you were now deprived of one hundred and thirty men-at-arms, there were so many unstalled horses in Italy, that you would certainly not need to remain on foot." But that for his ill there was no cure, because even if you did not complain of him, all who knew of his proceedings and of the Condotta granted to his son at his request, and of the *prestanza* brought to him to his own door, "will accuse him of ingratitude and bad faith, and he will be known as a stumbling horse whom no one will bestride, for fear lest he break his rider's neck; and that these things are not to be judged by doctors, but by Signory, and that he who respects his armour and desires to wear it with honour, esteems no loss equal to that of men's faith in him; and that this—as it seemed to me—he was now risking." Men should act in such fashion as to have no need to justify their deeds, but he on the contrary was obliged to justify himself much too often. "And thus I pricked him to the right and the left, telling him many things in a friendly way, and as though of my own accord; and although I beheld him change countenance many times, he never showed by his speech that he had any hope of changing my opinion."

The end of all this was that Machiavelli became convinced that there was an agreement between Alviano, the Orsini and Baglioni to take Pisa from the Florentines, and do even worse, if possible; that Petrucci of Sienna favoured the plot, and that while verbally professing friendship, all were in reality preparing for war. Therefore, after again repeating to Baglioni that he had better think well of what he was doing, for "that the matter was heavier than the weight of Perugia itself," Machiavelli went back to Florence. This legation is composed of a single letter, which however is written with great vigour, singular graphic power, and exhibits the intermixture of the homeliest and most familiar language with diplomatic dignity, that is one of the qualities of the Florentine Secretary's prose, and adds a lively colour to the originality of his style.[1] Meanwhile in Florence military preparations were being pushed forward with might and main, in order to be in readiness to face the threatened dangers. About this period a rumour was spread of the death of Louis XII., and it was instantly asserted that Alviano, with the assistance, not only of

[1] See this "Legazione" in the "Opere," vol. vii.

satisfied their vindictiveness by burning sticks of charcoal in the streets dipped in the victim's blood.[1] At a later period Baglioni was one of the conspirators at La Magione; but on this occasion, with worse fortune than before, he speedily had to fly before the advancing "Hydra," and became a Captain of Mercenaries in the service of France and the Florentines. Carlo Baglioni held Perugia for the Duke of Valentinois. On the decease of the Pope in August, 1503, Giovan Paolo quitted the Florentine service, and together with Gentile, cousin to Carlo Baglioni, hastened sword in hand to re-possess himself of his own State. The assault was given on the 8th of September; the cousins Carlo and Gentile fought like two lions, "each showing the other his valour, and how mighty is the daring and strength granted by Mars to this magnificent house of the Baglioni with whose renown all Italy rings."[2] By the 9th of September Giovan Paolo was once more lord of Perugia; and renewed his engagement with Florence; but now under one pretext, now another, he lent no effective service. Receiving a more pressing summons in consequence of the suspicions he had aroused, he then proposed that his son should be given a Condotta, consisting of a few lances, in order thus to make Florence believe that he remained faithful to the Republic without compromising himself in the eyes of its enemies. On this point also the Florentines had yielded to him; but now that Alviano was on the advance, and, above all, since their rout by the Pisans at the Cappellese bridge —they would no longer remain in so great an uncertainty. Accordingly, they forwarded to him part of the *prestanza* or advance of pay which it was customary to give to leaders about to take the field, and ordered him to immediately send the light horse in advance, and to follow them at once in person with his men-at-arms, upon which the remainder of the *prestanza* would be at his disposal. Finding that Baglioni neither took the money nor obeyed their summons, they resolved to send Machiavelli to clear the matter up, were it possible so to do

The Secretary's instructions, dated the 8th of April, were to the effect that he was to feign to believe the excuses alleged by Baglioni; but then "pricking him on various points," he was to try to ascertain the Perugian's real motives, and discover whether he acted in this way only to obtain higher terms, or because he was already in alliance with Alviano and the other enemies of Florence. On the 11th, Machiavelli wrote that Baglioni's pretended reason for refusing to stir was, because of the intrigues on foot against him in Perugia, and the fact that his capital enemies,

[1] *Matarazzo*, p. 150. [2] Ibid p. 211.

another adventurer hostile to Florence, went to Piombino, and Machiavelli, on the 28th of June, despatched another letter to Carnesecchi—who seems to have been somewhat undecided and presumptuous—bidding him keep in readiness on that side, and come to an understanding with the governor Ercole Bentivoglio.

"And we urge you to this measure not because of any want of confidence in you, nor because we deem your capacity not to be fine enough and therefore desire you to lean upon that of others; but because Messer Ercole being a prudent man, with all our forces at his command, it is necessary to arrange with him on all points."[1] On the same day a letter was sent to Bentivoglio, exposing the doubts of the Ten as to the conduct of the lord of Piombino, who was always hesitating between Pandolfo Petrucci and the Florentines, and equally distrustful of both. He had applied to Gonsalvo, who was said to have sent him eight hundred Spanish infantry in order not to have to pay them himself, and also that they might serve to alarm the Florentines. Even if this news, concluded the letter, be not all true, there is no doubt of the arrival of the Spaniards, hence it is in every way requisite to remain on the alert.[2] It was then proposed to despatch an ambassador to Gonsalvo himself, and although Soderini wished to send Niccolò Machiavelli, he met with so much opposition from the Councils, that Roberto Acciajoli was sent instead. Machiavelli had a much less important mission to Petrucci at Sienna who, although a declared adversary of the Florentines, now gave them warning of Alviano's hostile manœuvres, and proposed an alliance with them, offering one hundred men-at-arms for the expedition against Pisa, and fifty more the following year. This seemed a very extraordinary affair, and it was thought necessary to discover his true intentions.

While Baglioni was a tyrant of the Valentinois school, Petrucci was no warrior, but one of those who attained power, like the Medici, almost solely by acuteness and cunning, though not without some occasional bloodshed. His counsellor and secretary, Antonio da Venafro, a man of obscure parentage, was first known as a professor of the University of Sienna, and a judge of the *Riformagioni*; then, entering political life, he rose to fortune, and efficaciously assisted Petrucci to become tyrant of Sienna. The latter's power began to be consolidated in 1495, from the time when Charles VIII, in returning from Naples, left a few French lances in the city, and was more and more strengthened in the

[1] Letters of the 28th of June. Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 116, at sheet 143.

[2] Ibidem, No. 116, at sheet 141t.

the Orsini and Vitelli, but also of the Venetians, of Gonsalvo dei Cordova himself, and of Cardinal Ascanio Sforza,[1] was about to advance on Tuscany in order to restore the Medici, and then drive the French from Milan, where he would re-establish the rule of the Sforza in the person of the Cardinal. All these rumours however were dispersed like smoke by the wind, when it was kown that the King of France was not dead, and Ascanio himself died in the month of May. This did not check Alviano, but his designs were restricted to Tuscany, as had at first been suspected, so that certain individuals in Florence even made the strange proposal to conclude the matter by giving him a Condotta. And although not a few tried to support this step, it could not be made acceptable to any man of prudence, for not only was it derogatory to the dignity of the Republic, but extremely perilous, inasmuch as all knew that Alviano and the Orsini desired the return of the Medici. Therefore at the next election of the Ten all intrigues failed, and a proposal was carried for the arrangement of a Condotta with the Marquis of Mantova, as Captain-General, with three hundred men-at-arms. But even in this quarter negotiations proceeded very slowly, and although, on the 4th of May, Machiavelli was sent to settle the matter, he did not succeed in arranging anything, because the Marquis continually brought forward fresh obstacles.[2]

Hence, instead of diminishing, the Republic's anxieties daily increased. Even the Lord of Piombino appeared to be joining the enemies of Florence, and it was said that one thousand Spanish foot soldiers had arrived there, for which reason the Commissary Pier Antonio Carnesecchi received orders to go and see how affairs really stood.[3] After that, Ranieri della Sassetta,

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," pp. 102, 103 Ascanio Sforza had long aspired to the government of Milan. As far back as the 10th of September, 1487, the ambassador at Rome, Lanfredini, had written to Lorenzo il Magnifico, that the Cardinal Ascanio had said to him: "I have advices from Milan, that the Lord Lodovico is seriously ill and without the grace of God, cannot be cured of his malady, and this the physicians say plainly. And should God not grant that grace, I should desire—as it also seems to be my duty—to enter upon that government, and no one thinks that there be any with a better right to it than I, nor any under whom that State and that Signore (his nephew Giovan Galeazzo, then still a minor) might live more quietly, both because I am his uncle, and because of my clerical garb" Afterwards, by means of the ambassador, he begged to be aided by Lorenzo in the matter. See the "Lettere dell' ambasciatore Lanfredini," Florence Archives, "Carte Medicee," file lvii.

[2] See the "Commissione" in the "Opere," vol vii. p 13. In the "Opere" (P. M), vol. v. p 103 and fol, the proposed terms of the "Condotta" are published.

[3] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 116, at sheet 151. See too Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti," pp. 188, 190, 91.

of his eye and his chosen of men," renewed their proposal of first coming to an agreement, before thinking of isolating Alviano from the others, he, fearing that their only intention was to compromise the Republic still farther, demanded that something practical should be first done, "by stamping out those sparks." [1]

On the 21st of July they went deeper into the matter, Petrucci declaring with lengthy arguments that, notwithstanding his personal willingness, he was unable alone, and without previous concert with Florence, to oppose Alviano and check these movements. "It was not true that in this case it was he who held both reins and spurs; for spurs he had never had, and was pulling the reins as hard as he could" In vain Machiavelli repeated all the arguments which his wit could suggest, for Petrucci, fixed in his resolve, tried to bewilder him by strange counsels and contradictory statements Accordingly he wrote to the Ten—"To show him that I well understood his deceit, I said, 'that his conduct made me so confused, that I expected to lose my wits before I left Sienna.' First it was said that Bartolemmo d'Alviano was coming provided with Spanish money and Spanish infantry, then that Gonsalvo was opposed to him and would stop his advance; now that he was ready to pass, then that he was begging for assistance; now that he was agreed with the Pope, and now that they were enemies; then that they were agreed with Sienna, and then again that his soldiers were pillaging the Siennese foragers. Therefore it was my wish that Sua Signoria should explain this tale to me."

Pandolfo, without any confusion, replied—"I will tell you that which King Frederic replied to an envoy of mine on a similar question, and this was 'that I should govern day by day, and should judge of things hour by hour, so to make fewer blunders. since these times were too confused for human wits,' and added that the confusion was heightened by Alviano, 'a man capable at any moment, while disposing of such a force, of inspiring his neighbours with hope and fear'" [2] To the end Petrucci went on in this tone, "for he is a man," says Machiavelli, "whom it is little or no profit to look in the face" And on the evening of the 23rd Petrucci showed him a letter containing the intelligence that Gonsalvo had forbidden Alviano to make disturbances in Tuscany. "Reason suggests that Alviano should be obedient and remain quiet; yet as men do not always listen to reason, despair may urge him on. And although of those spurred by despair, three out of four end badly, *tamen* it would be well that

[1] Letter of the 20th July
[2] Letter of the 21st July, 19 of the clock.

following years by the death of his most formidable rivals, who were all assassinated in some way or other, and by the aid of Venafro's counsels. Having sent Venafro, as the ablest man he had, to arrange all the plot of *La Magione*, he was driven from power by Valentinois who styled him *the brain* of that conspiracy, and afterwards returned to Sienna, backed by French assistance and the favour of the whole population. In fact the Siennese were attached to him, partly because his opponents were worse than himself, but chiefly because he was regarded as a man of talent, who, once sure of his position, did his best to rule with justice and lenity. Besides, in the universal hatred for Valentinois, popular sympathy was very naturally aroused in favour of one who had had an almost miraculous escape from his hands. Nevertheless Petrucci continued to have a share in all intrigues, and liked to be considered the prime mover in them. Amid the fresh complications now arising, he steered his way with wonderful dexterity, and while professing friendship to Florence, who had certainly the power to do him great harm, he tried to draw nearer to her enemies, perceiving that the bad fortune of the French was transferring strength to another quarter and continually increasing the power of the friends of Spain.

The following is the gist of the instructions given to Machiavelli on the 16th of May, 1505. "You will ask his (Petrucci's) advice as to what should be done, and enlarging upon that topic, you will turn it about on all sides, using your own discretion and the prudence for which you have ever been noted, to ascertain, in course of conversation, that Lord's real mind." [1] And on the 17th Machiavelli wrote from Sienna, that Petrucci wished to form an alliance with Florence, without in any way engaging to check Alviano in his enterprise, proposing instead to try to weaken him by isolating him from the Vitelli, "for Alviano being of a haughty and unscrupulous nature, he might—now finding himself at the head of an armed force and without a State—attempt some desperate game; and Italy is full of robbers, accustomed to live on other's property, wherefore many would be ready to follow his lead for the sake of plunder." [2] But from various quarters Machiavelli received warnings against Petrucci, and assurances that he was an enemy of Florence and the Gonfaloniere, that he was acting in concert with Gonsalvo and Alviano, was the author of all these movements, and "always had his foot in a thousand stirrups, so as to be able to withdraw it whenever he liked." [3] Accordingly, when Petrucci and Antonio da Venafro, "who is the apple

[1] See this "Legazione," in the "Opere," vol. vii. p. 16 and fol.
[2] Letter of the 17th July. [3] Letter of the 18th July.

in which all would be won or all lost, would be more perilous still"[1]

Florence had now in the field five hundred and fifty men-at-arms and three hundred and twenty light horse, beside a little artillery, and a few thousand foot. One hundred of their men-at-arms were at Cascina, the others at Campiglia and at Bibbona, the headquarters of the army. Alviano's forces were no less numerous, therefore the battle would be hardly contested and decisive. On the 14th Giacomini learnt that the enemy's troops were advancing, and at dawn, on the morning of the 17th, that they were close at hand and in battle array; the Florentines came up with them at Torre di San Vincenzo, and the conflict immediately began. The infantry, who were, it was said, in the pay of Petrucci, were routed at the first onset, and then the squadrons of Jacopo Savello and Marcantonio Colonna immediately sounding the attack, the whole of the hostile army began to give way before them. Upon this Alviano himself pressed to the front with his hundred men-at-arms and gained a little ground; but being taken in flank by Ercole Bentivoglio and the mass of the Florentine army, the Republic won the day, and the artillery completed the enemy's defeat. From beginning to end the battle only lasted two hours, after which time Alviano—who, though skilled, was nearly always an unfortunate leader—seeing the total defeat of his troops and bleeding from a wound in the face, escaped with some difficulty over the Siennese border with eight or ten horsemen. The Florentines captured about a thousand horses, a great number of waggons, many prisoners, and beheld the host that had threatened them melt away as though by enchantment.[2]

But this victory was of very little service to the Florentines, on account of the undue confidence it inspired in their own strength. Giacomini had sent a report of the enemy's defeat without adding anything else; but on the other hand, Bentivoglio, who was generally esteemed to have more capacity for planning campaigns than for carrying them out, proposed to make the attack upon Pisa without loss of time, and likewise aim a few blows at Sienna and Lucca.[3] The Gonfaloniere was transported by the idea of immediately assaulting and capturing Pisa, and thus turning the heat of victory to account. In vain the more prudent citizens and the Ten opposed him with the argument that their

[1] *Loc. cit.*, at sheet 191*t*.

[2] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 113. The same evening Giacomini sent the Ten a letter, in which he related the defeat of Alviano. "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv No 11.

[3] Bentivoglio's letter also is dated the 17th August, and is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No. 10.

he should not be urged by despair, for the moving of one thing sets a thousand others in motion, and various are the chances of events." Therefore it would be well for the Florentines to take precautions.[1] Nor was it possible to extract anything more from him; so after a conversation with Venafro, to whom he remarked that he had often seen "many who laughed in the summer and wept in the winter,"[2] Machiavelli went back to Florence in greater uncertainty of mind than on his departure.

The only thing now to be done was to prepare for war, and the Ten recalled to office their distinguished Commissary Giacomini, sending him letters-patent on the 30th of July with injunctions to lose no time in concerting with the Governor on the steps to be taken; and at the same time they raised the courage of the Commissary Carnesecchi in Maremma, by assuring him that there was no immediate danger.[3] Very soon, however, they had to change their tone and were lamenting to him that Alviano was already near Campiglia and beginning to assume the offensive "before our vanguard is formed, but we think that our plan is ordered in such fashion that, with the help of your prudence, all may be remedied." And they promised immediate reinforcements.[4]

Alviano was aware that he could accomplish nothing against the will of Gonsalvo, who, although not wishing the Florentines to take Pisa, would not allow them to be directly assailed, since they were included in the treaty with France, and whose only object in sending a few Spanish foot soldiers to Piombino, was to be prepared for every emergency. Therefore Alviano, notwithstanding the favour and secret assistance of Baglioni and Petrucci, had not yet been able to decide upon his plan of operations He would have accepted a good Condotta from Florence in order to act as he chose afterwards; but as there no longer seemed any possibility of that, he had remained till the 17th of July at Vignale, on the domains of the Lord of Piombino, and was now preparing to enter Pisa, from whence he could inflict much damage upon the Florentines In fact, towards the middle of August, Giacomini gave intelligence of the enemies' advance, and his own determination to give them battle; to which the Ten replied, that they left all to his judgment and that of the Governor, "begging them, however, to consider that however perilous Alviano's entry into Pisa might be, a decisive battle,

[1] Letter of the 21st July. [2] Letter of the 23rd July.

[3] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 114, at sheet 173, Ibid. No. 116, at sheet 171*t*.

[4] Ibid., cl. x. dist. 3, No. 116 at sheet 178*t*.

army was too small, and that with the Spaniards at Piombino, they would be running an enormous risk. It was true that these Spaniards were few in number, but others might arrive at any moment, and might perhaps be already on their way from Naples. Some even spoke of a camp being already formed or forming at Leghorn. It was known for certain that the Great Captain had flown into a fury, and sending for Acciaioli had burst into violent threats against the Florentines, who had, he said, promised at least to leave alone for the present the city of Pisa, which he was resolved to defend, if needful, with his own soldiery.[1] Soderini scoffed at this, declaring that within a week the campaign would be at an end. A very numerous Pratica was held by the Ten, and his proposal was rejected. Thereupon he carried the matter before the Eighty and the Great Council, where he was determined to have it passed; and in fact on the 19th of August he succeeded in obtaining a grant of a hundred thousand florins to begin the assault without delay.

Machiavelli was sent to the camp as bearer of instructions to Giacomini and to Bentivoglio, who was nominated Captain-general.[2] On the 24th he was back in Florence, where he reported on all the requirements of the besiegers, and zealously set to work to forward the necessary preparations. Foot soldiers were levied throughout the dominions; others were hired at Bologna, in Romagna, and even in Rome, where also pay was given to five hundred and seventy-five Spaniards who happened to be disengaged, not in order to make use of them, but to prevent their going to the help of the Pisans. Sappers were engaged, arms, ammunition, and all available artillery despatched.

On the 7th of September the army was at a few hours' distance from Pisa, and on the following day eleven guns were planted before the Calcesana gate. The fire began at sunrise, towards 22 o'clock (two hours before sunset), thirty-six braccia, that is, twenty-four yards, of wall had been demolished; but an attempt to carry the breach by storm was instantly repulsed. Nevertheless, as only a third of the Florentine army was engaged in the attack, its failure was of no importance. But in the meantime three hundred Spanish foot, sent from Piombino by Gonsalvo, had entered the city by the Porta a Mare, and this boded ill for the

[1] Buonaccorsi, 115–17; Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti," p. 205 and fol.; Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxviii. pp 321, 322; Nardi, "Vita di A. Giacomini;" Pitti, "Vita di A. Giacomini" in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," vol. iv. part ii.

[2] See the three letters of the Ten, not written by Machiavelli, published in the "Opere," vol. vii pp 48–55.

him all that he desired, as soon as the enterprise were "really begun."[1]

Machiavelli started at once, and on the 28th of August wrote from Civita Castellana, that he had found the Pope at Nepi already prepared to set out and full of hopefulness. His Holiness was satisfied with the Florentine promises, was expecting four or five hundred lances from the French, besides the hundred Stradiotes from Naples, "and had his pouch full of infantry." He was riding at the head of his troops, which were commanded by the Duke of Urbino. The Venetian ambassador promised him the assistance of his Republic on condition of its being allowed to retain Faenza and Rimini; but the Pope laughed at this, and went on his way confident of success.[2]

Already on the 5th of September, Baglioni, terror-stricken by the unusual circumstance of beholding the Head of the Church marching in person against him, had come to Orvieto to negotiate a surrender. And on the 9th Machiavelli wrote from Castel della Pieve, that all was arranged · that the city gates and fortresses had already been given up. Baglioni was to take part in the expedition as one of the Captains of the Pope, who said that he was willing to forgive him the past; but that if found sinning again, however venially, would certainly hang him. Julius II. had decided to have five hundred infantry drawn up in the Piazza of Perugia, and fifty at each gate, before making his entry,[3] but so great was his haste to go there, that on the 13th of September he entered the city with his Cardinals, without giving the Duke of Urbino time to execute the orders received. The Duke had marched his men to the vicinity of the gates, and Baglioni's forces were at a short distance, so that Pope and Cardinals were at the latter's mercy. "And if he works no evil," wrote Machiavelli, "against him who has come to strip him of his State, it will be because of his good nature and humanity. What will be the termination of this matter I know not, but we shall see, when the Pope has been here some six or eight days."[4] Giovan Paolo said that he preferred saving his State by humility rather than force, and therefore trusted to the Duke of Urbino. But the Pope, without troubling himself about other things, occupied the city, and recalled the old exiles—not however the more recent, since that

[1] See the instructions to Machiavelli, in vol. vii. of the "Opere," at p. 64.

[2] Letters of the 29th of August from Civita Castellana, and of the last day of August from Viterbo

[3] Letters of the 9th of September from Castel della Pieve, and of the 12th of September from Corciano.

[4] Letter of the 13th September.

were now devoted for many years. But before speaking of it in detail, it is necessary for us to notice his mission to the Court of Pope Julius II., which was an important episode in the history of 1506.

The new Pontiff, without neglecting his kinsmen, promptly provided for their wants, in order to dedicate himself heart and soul to the re-conquest of the provinces formerly appertaining to the Church. Now that Spain ruled in the kingdom of Naples, it was more necessary than ever to extend his dominions towards the north, so as not to be at the mercy of his southern neighbours. To drive the Venetians from Romagna, destroy the petty tyrants who had again risen to power on the downfall of the Borgia, and achieve all this for the benefit, not of his nephews, but of the Church, such was the object which this man of sixty-three years had in view and to which he devoted the rest of his life with a will of iron, the ardour of a youth, and the courage, not of a priest, but of a military leader. Already at the signing of the treaty of Blois between France and Spain, he had contrived to have it agreed that Louis XII, the Emperor and the Archduke Philip should attack Venice. This was not carried out; but the peace definitively concluded in the same city on the 26th of October, 1505, between the French and the Spanish,—who had to submit to many sacrifices in order to retain possession of Naples—left Italy at rest, and the Pope then decided to undertake himself that which others would not do for him. Wishing to assure tranquillity in Rome, his first act was the reinstatement of many of the nobles in the possessions from which they had been ousted by Alexander VI., whom he stigmatized in his Bulls as a fraudulent deceiver and usurper. He also formed ties of relationship with the Orsini and the Colonna, giving one of his daughters in marriage to Giovan Giordano Orsini, and a niece to the youthful Marcantonio Colonna On the 26th of August, with a retinue of twenty-four cardinals, at the head of four hundred men-at-arms, and his small Swiss guard, the Pope set out to attempt the conquest of Perugia and Bologna, both very strong and well-garrisoned cities. He expected one hundred Stradiotes from Naples; other soldiery from the Gonzagas, the Este, the Montefeltro, from France and from the Florentines, for all these were friendly to him. The latter—from whom Julius had requested the loan of their Captain Marcantonio Colonna and his company—despatched Niccolò Machiavelli to him on the 25th of August, to signify their readiness to aid in his "holy work"; but that they were unable for the moment to let him have Colonna, it being impossible to leave the army before Pisa without a commander; they promised however to give

divine, lay beyond the sphere of his chosen studies, and had no interest for him. Fate, the caprices even of fortune, might, he considered, be subjects of study, but not the will of God, which, in whatever light it be regarded, certainly transcends our intellect. The daring of Julius II., who, at sixty-three years of age, pursued his march, in the height of summer, without counting the danger of falling into his enemy's hands, did not appear to him a proof of true acumen. The foresight and demoniac cunning of Valentinois had been worthy of study as models of art; but the blind foolhardiness of the Pope, if a personal merit, was no sign of political tact, and therefore he bestowed very slight attention upon it. *In the same way that* he had separated the political from the moral phenomenon, so also he mentally separated the art of the statesman from the individual or private character of him who exercised it, alone seeking in him the qualities useful or necessary to its due development.

At this time he did not even pause to describe the formation of the new government in Perugia. On the 25th of September he wrote from Urbino, that the Pope was more hotly bent than ever upon the accomplishment of his enterprise, of which it was very difficult to predict the conclusion, since—should French assistance fail him—the Pope might, in his furious haste, come to a bad end.[1] The Venetians were awaiting his first reverses, to bring him round to their wishes with the help of the king; others asserted on the contrary that the Pope would know how to drive the king, "so powerful were the spurs he could plunge into his flanks . . . ; but what these spurs may be, I know not."[2] Certainly on the 3rd of October, Louis XII had already declared for the Pope against Venice and Bologna, and six orators from the latter city were in Cesena to negotiate the surrender. When, however, they referred to terms agreed to by former Popes, Julius II. replied that he cared nothing for them, nor even desired to know anything of those signed by himself. His aim was to liberate that people from tyrants, and to bring into subjection to the Church all that rightfully belonged to the Church; were he to neglect doing so, he would have no justification before God.

Being now assured of French assistance, and having passed in review at Cesena forces amounting to 600 men-at-arms, 1600 foot, and 300 Swiss, he begged the Florentines to send Colonna and his 100 men-at-arms without delay, as he was on the point of setting out for Bologna[3] Giovanni Bentivoglio was already beginning to

[1] Letter of the 25th of September from Urbino.
[2] First letter of the 28th of September.
[3] Letters of the 3rd, 4th, and 5th of October.

would have exposed the now deposed lord to too much danger; meantime the hundred Stradiotes had arrived from Naples.[1]

It is well known how in the "Discorsi sulla Prima Deca di Tito Livio,"[2] Machiavelli blamed the conduct of Baglioni, accusing him of cowardice, for not having dared to seize the persons of the Pope and his cardinals, by which means he might have rid himself of them and been the first to prove to prelates "how little worthy of esteem be those who live and reign as they." But this is not the moment for us to enter upon an examination of works of so different a nature. This Legation, on the contrary, compels us to make another observation. Machiavelli had been enthusiastic about Valentinois, filled with admiration for his craft and dishonest actions, yet he showed little interest in Julius II., who, despite numerous defects and many crimes, was not without some of the qualities of true greatness. It is positive that the Secretary was much astonished, on seeing that Baglioni did not dare to resist, and made no use of the favourable moment; but his indifference to the Pope was so great that this Legation is one of those of least importance, although it might have been expected to be of the highest. He confined himself strictly to his official work, without finding any special matter for study, and without indulging in any considerations of a general nature or foreign to the subject in hand.

In fact his thoughts were otherwise absorbed, namely in the institution of the Florentine militia, that he had already initiated, and was burning to carry on; he was continually asking and receiving news on the subject from his friend Buonaccorsi. Then too he had always entertained a singular contempt—almost amounting to hatred—for the priesthood; in his opinion Popes were, and had ever been, the ruin of Italy. Besides it seemed to him that the statesmen could derive but scanty profit from the study of ecclesiastical principalities, since their strength was derived from religion, and they were the sole States which—however governed—always remained permanent.[3]

If the authority of religion and the power of the Church were still so great that a perfidious, cunning daring man like Baglioni was awed by the mere presence of the Pope, Machiavelli did not believe that this fact could prove very instructive to one seeking to discover the secrets of statecraft, and wishing to investigate in the political phenomenon the *natural* causes, and *human* passions forming its basis. All that was or claimed to be

[1] Letters of the 16th and 19th of September from Perugia,
[2] Book i. chap. xxvii.
[3] "Principe," chap xi.

good sum of money, added to the promise of a cardinal's hat for his brother. Thus, on the 11th of November, Julius II. was able to enter Bologna in triumph like a Cæsar, surrounded by cardinals, bishops, prelates, and lords of the neighbouring cities. He changed the government, instituting a Senate of forty citizens, which lasted for a prolonged period; he respected the municipal Statutes; he caused a citadel to be built, and finally, on the 22nd of February, 1507, took his departure well content with having thus far succeeded in all that he wished. On the 27th of March, the Pope came by the Tiber to Ponte Molle, and then made his solemn entry into the Eternal City. This enterprise had rapidly raised him to a great height in the eyes of his contemporaries.

In the meantime Machiavelli was back in Florence working at his favourite scheme of the Militia. He had long been convinced that the ruin of the Italian States was caused by the want of native troops, and the necessity of always relying upon mercenaries. He had been farther confirmed in this idea every time that he had had to visit the camp, by being himself an eye-witness of the insubordination, insolence, and bad faith of the adventurers, to whom the magistrates were compelled to trust the safety of their country. He had seen the strength acquired by Valentinois, when the latter had made a levy throughout his possessions of "one man per household,"[1] and thus formed a large nucleus of native soldiery. All the more powerful European States, such as Spain, Germany, France, were faithfully served by armies of their own; even Switzerland, though so small a country, had succeeded, by means of free institutions, in forming the first infantry in the world; why could not the Italians, the Florentines, do the same? Had it not been accomplished by the Communes of the Middle Ages; was not a feeble example of it now displayed in the obstinate defence of the Pisans, trained to arms by the force of necessity; and, above all, was it not the method pursued by the Romans, the world's teachers alike in the arts of peace and of war? Why could not their organization and that of the Swiss be imitated in Florence; and what doubt could there be, but that here also identical results might be attained?

This was the idea upon which Machiavelli's mind was so ardently bent. To give to Florence, and later perhaps to Italy, an army of her own and with it the strength which she now lacked, and the political dignity never possessed by weak States, was henceforward the dream of his life. And to this he devoted himself with so disinterested an ardour, with so youthful an enthusiasm,

[1] See the fragment of a document quoted by Canestrini in the "Scritti Inediti" of Machiavelli, Preface, p. xxxvi.

speak of surrender; but on his proposal that the Pope should enter the city with his Swiss Guards alone, Julius in reply issued a Bull against him and his adherents, declaring them rebels to the Holy Church; giving up their possessions to pillage; and granting indulgence to any who would act against or kill them; and he then continued his journey.[1] Not wishing to enter places occupied by the Venetians, his route from Forlì to Imola lay through the territory of the Florentines, who received no notice of his intentions, until he was actually crossing the border. Nevertheless the Republic did all in its power to show him friendship and respect: Marcantonio Colonna received orders to march to join him on the 17th; Niccolò Machiavelli hurried on in advance, so that no necessaries might be wanting in so hasty and sudden a journey. Then the Ten wrote instantly to Piero Guicciardini, the Commissary in Mugello, to inform him of his Holiness's advance: "He was to send forward four or six mule-loads of Puliciano wine of the very best quality, a little Trebbiano wine, a few loads of good cream cheese, and one load at least of fine Camilla pears"[2]

The Pope passed rapidly through Marradi and Palazzuolo, where everything was in readiness; and on the 21st he was at Imola which he made his head-quarters. On the same day Machiavelli wrote from thence that his Holiness demanded from Bentivoglio an unconditional surrender, and that, most probably, he would obtain it. He also said that now matters were becoming serious and the general state of Italy had to be considered, it was advisable that an ambassador should be sent to the camp. The Pope had requested this, so the Florentines despatched Francesco Pepi, and on his arrival at Imola on the 26th, Machiavelli took his departure with the most anxious desire to resume the task of constituting the militia

Bentivoglio could probably have repulsed the attack, had he not been hated by his people—who had already risen on the arrival of the Papal Bulls—and had he not been forsaken by France which sent eight thousand men to the Pope's assistance, under the command of Charles d'Amboise, who immediately made himself master of Castelfranco. The Bolognese, dreading a sack, drove out Bentivoglio on the 2nd of November, and then sent to Imola to make their submission to the Pope. When however the French tried to force an entrance, the people rose in revolt, overwhelmed the enemies' camp, showed themselves prepared for defence, and thus obliged the Pope to send [illegible]Amboise, on payment of a

[1] Letter of the 10th of October [illegible]

[2] Letter of the 17th of October, 15[illegible] [illegible]he "Opere" (P. M.), p. 231, note 1.

replete as it is with just observations and original ideas—contains much to remind us that he was not a military man. For instance, we need only cite his almost entire want of belief in the efficacy of fire-arms, which nevertheless destroyed the old and created the new system of tactics. Matteo Bandello, in one of the proems serving as preludes to his *Novelle*, relates that one day he found himself under the walls of Milan in the company of Giovanni dei Medici, the celebrated Captain—better known as Giovanni of the Black Bands—and of Machiavelli. The latter, wishing to give them an idea of a certain military manœuvre he had frequently described very well, kept three thousand men out in the sun for more than two hours without being able to effect the desired movement, until—dinner-time being long past—Giovanni lost patience, put him aside, and in an instant, with the aid of the drums, put them through several manœuvres in a masterly manner. After this, Machiavèlli, in recompense for the time that he had caused them to waste, related a tale at table, which is included among those of Bandello[1] And although history makes no mention of this anecdote, there is nothing improbable in it; and at all events it is additional evidence, that in his own day, the author of the "Art of War," so generally admired as a writer upon military subjects, was not recognized as a man of practical military knowledge.

The Republic had long thought of forming a militia of its own, but without any faith in the success of the plan; Machiavelli, on the contrary, had entire faith in it. The nearly always unsatisfactory behaviour of the *comandati*; the cowardice of the infantry who, during the last attack on the walls of Pisa, had refused to storm the breach, had convinced the majority that professional soldiers alone were to be trusted; but Machiavelli had always struggled against this opinion, endeavouring to prove that the whole evil resulted from the lack of good instruction and discipline. First of all he tried to win over the Gonfaloniere, "and finding some chance of success, began to explain his method in detail."[2]

[1] It is the fortieth tale in Part I.: "Imganno usato da una scaltrita donna al marito, con una subita astuzia." Machiavelli begins his narration as follows: "I hold the firm opinion, *Signor mio*, that if you had not got me out of the scrape this morning, we should still be broiling in the sun." See too the "Proemio" dedicated to Giovanni dei Medici, and in which the author, after relating the anecdote, goes on to say "I beg you to well remember that Messer Niccolò is one of the finest and most copious and eloquent speakers of your Tuscany, and that I am a Lombard; but when you recall that it is written by your Bandello, whom so much you love and favour, I venture to believe that it will not delight you less in reading it, than it delighted those who heard it narrated. Farewell to you."

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap. xxix. p. 324.

that, for the first time, his character awakes in us a sympathy and admiration which before it was impossible to feel The cynical smile of the cold diplomatist disappears from his lips, and his physiognomy suddenly assumes, to our eyes, a serious and severe solemnity, revealing to us the flame of genuine patriotism, that is burning in his heart and ennobling his existence. If, as father, husband, and son, we have found little to blame in him, there has been equally little to admire. His habits are not exempt from the sins of his age. As a citizen, until now he has only faithfully served the Republic with the talents with which nature had so bounteously endowed him. We have seen, it is true, that in the many missions entrusted to him, he never thought of using his opportunities for the purpose of worldly advancement, but instead devoted himself to investigating the principles of a new science, with an ardour rendering him oblivious of his own personal interests, occasionally even of some of the smaller affairs daily recommended to his notice. But this was a scientific disinterestedness, of which we have numerous examples even in the midst of the corruption of the Italian Renaissance. When however Machiavelli endeavours to stimulate the Gonfaloniere to found the new Militia, and writes to Cardinal Soderini, to assist in influencing his brother, and travels throughout the dominions of the Republic; distributing arms, enrolling infantry, writing thousands of letters, and begging to be allowed to continue his study of camps and garrisons, it is impossible not to acknowledge this to be a proof of deep and sincere self-abnegation in favour of the public good. In his quality of Secretary and as a man of letters, who had never followed a military career, he could expect no personal advantage from all this, not even one step of promotion in his own office. Therefore his sole motive was a pure patriotism, of which there were now but too few examples in Italy, and which on that account surrounds his image with a halo, such as no other of the most illustrious *literati* of his age can boast.

But, from all that we have just said, it by no means follows that our admiration should make us lose sight of Machiavelli's errors and defects, nor regard him, as some writers have tried, as a military genius. The grandeur and originality of his conception were what might have been expected from a patriot and a political man, having had the administration of war affairs in his hands, and who, at a time when war was a far simpler matter than at the present day, had often lived in camp, had held long conversations on military things with Giacomini and other contemporary leaders; but who had never had the command of a single company. Even his book upon "L'Arte della guerra"—

All must perceive that the first and most essential elements of strength were wanting in a state where every town tended to separate itself from the dominant city, the which, by its monopoly of all political rights, was necessarily forced to regard with most distrust the very citizens to whom it wished to confide its defence. But the Florentine secretary was blind to some of these difficulties, since, according to the ideas of his time, there was nothing abnormal or unusual in them; others, he hoped, would be overcome by degrees. Thus, for instance, he wrote that after arming the *contado*, it might perhaps be feasible—with certain precautions—to arm at least a portion of the *distretto*. He had unlimited faith in this new military organization, and in conclusion told his fellow-citizens: "You will learn, even in your own time, how great is the difference between fellow-citizens who are soldiers by choice, and not, as at present, from mercenary motives; for now if any man has been a disobedient son and squandered his substance in dissipation, he it is who becomes a soldier, whereas, on the new system, well brought up men, educated in honest schools, will do honour to themselves and their country."[1]

Inspired by these ideas, he not only sought to directly infuse them in the mind of the Gonfaloniere, but also availed himself of the co-operation of those having influence over him. In the beginning of 1506 he wrote to Cardinal Soderini in Rome, begging him to persuade his brother that a severe and just *regimen* in the city and the *contado* would form a safe and solid basis for the new ordinance. And on the 4th of March the Cardinal replied to him—"I am more than ever convinced that facts confirm our hopes *pro salute et dignitate patriæ*; there is no doubt but that other nations have become superior to ourselves solely through the maintenance of discipline, which has long been banished from Italy; and great must be your content that your hand has begun so worthy a thing." In accordance with Machiavelli's request, he wrote the same day to the Gonfaloniere, congratulating him on the confidence universally reposed in the new militia, from which every one awaited the revival of past glories, and taking care to repeat that all depended upon good discipline, *quæ plurimum consistit in obedientia, maximaque fundatur in justitia*, concluded by proposing that, to maintain this justice, there should be nominated "some minister similar to Manlius and Torquatus (*sic*), very rigid and severe, who in urgent matters will know how to act with promptitude, but in lesser affairs will trust to his officers."[2]

[1] See Appendix, document xii.
[2] These two letters, and one quoted further on, also by Cardinal Soderini, are

But even when he had convinced him, a thousand difficulties opposed the execution of the scheme, and first of all the distrust of those who feared that Soderini might use it as a means of establishing himself as a tyrant. Recourse was therefore had to the prudent step of making experiments of the new method on a small scale, in the hope that the citizens would then recognize its utility, and vote the legislative measures acquired to give it permanence and stability. Such in fact was afterwards the result.

We have one of Machiavelli's reports containing all the details of the steps taken by him in this first attempt—steps which afterwards received legal recognition. These serve to show us how very different were the ideas of that period from our own, and how enormous and often insuperable the difficulties with which men had to contend. First of all he states, as a point beyond discussion, that if the Republic desires an army of its own, that army should be officered solely by Florentines, and its cavalry exclusively composed of them. And as the formation of cavalry was exactly the most difficult part of the new scheme, it was necessary for the present to begin with levying infantry outside the city. The territory, however, was divided into the *contado* (or territory proper), and into districts, that is to say those portions containing large cities, and formerly ruled by them, before becoming subject to the Republic either by conquest or of their own free will. These districts, it would be highly dangerous to arm, "for," writes Machiavelli, "of such sort are Tuscan humours, that he who once knew he might live independently, would never more seek a master."[1] Therefore, at least for the present, only the territory proper was to be armed. Nor was this the only precaution. So great was the general distrust, that it was even forbidden that any constables elected to the command of the companies formed under the different flags should be of the same birthplace as the common soldiers, or allowed to command the same troop for more than one year. The motive of this was to prevent the constables from becoming too much attached to their men, lest they should gain undue influence, and thereby become dangerous[2]

[1] "Due scritture inedite di Niccolò Machiavelli," p. 11, Pisa, Nistri, 1872. They were published by Professor A. D'Ancona on the occasion of the Cavalieri-Zabron marriage. Only the first of these relates to the militia, and had already been published by Ghinassi for the Zambrini-Della Volpe marriage; Faenza, Pietro Conti Press. These publications, made as wedding gifts, and for private circulation only, are often very difficult to obtain, and are little heard of, thus, as D'Ancona, so diligent in research, knew nothing of his predecessor's publication, so others may be unaware of his, or unable to find it. Therefore in Appendix, at document xii., we give the letter referring to the militia ordinance.

[2] Ibid.

and bloodthirstiness would do more good than harm. He wished Don Michele to be feared and respected by his men, so that, in case of necessity, he might lead them against the enemy, and, by his own example, joined to the prestige of his cruel severity, render them hardy and formidable in the field. When in the June of that year, some of the new infantry, sent to the camp before Pisa, acquitted themselves but indifferently of their duties, he wrote to the Commissary-general in Cascina, Giovanni Ridolfi, that he was sending him Don Michele with his company of one hundred men, to serve against the Pisans, for since these hold our infantry in slight esteem, we would willingly cause them to change their opinion. "And he (Don Michele) having been accustomed, while with the Duke, to the command and management of the same sort of men, we think that it would be a good plan, if possible, to quarter him there with them, so that he should get used to them first, and then in case of having to make any sudden expedition in any direction, he and his infantry could quickly effect a junction with them. And after having seen and handled the troops at the reviews, he will soon be able to turn them to account on active service." [1]

This then was Machiavelli's idea: Don Michele was to infuse the new military spirit into the young Florentine army. But why, it might be reasonably asked, did they not rather appeal to that valiant soldier and excellent patriot, Antonio Giacomini? How could the rulers of Florence suppose an assassin capable of inculcating genuine discipline, that is, military honour? Yet even if Giacomini had not been in disgrace just then, the Florentines would never have granted a fellow-citizen so much power over the new Florentine army. There would have been the usual alarm lest he might establish a tyranny. As in former times they had required their Podestà to be a foreigner, so now their Bargello del Contado.

The new militia, according to Machiavelli, was to be animated by a truly patriotic spirit, and must therefore be composed of honest and well-conducted men; but the individual charged to command and instruct them need have nothing beyond a special capacity for that task, which would be in no way affected by his moral character. Often, indeed, goodness of heart might prove an obstacle to those acts of severity and cruelty, which the captain as well as the statesman is sometimes called upon to perform.

According to modern ideas there should be a bond of unity between leaders and their men; they should be as one body

[1] Letter of the 12th of June, 1506, in the Florence Archives, cl. x., dist. 3, No. 121, at sheet 1t.

The new militia being only in course of formation, did not as yet require a general-in-chief, and the recruits could be instructed by their so-called constables, some of whom were even foreigners; but it was imperative to have a superior authority of some sort, if only for the maintenance of discipline, and the punishment, when needed, of offenders. For this purpose it was decided, according to the suggestion given—or rather caused to be given—by the Cardinal to the Gonfaloniere, to elect a man of practical military knowledge and reputation. But who would have supposed that the Gonfaloniere and Machiavelli, both animated by so pure and noble a patriotism, so high an admiration for Manlius Torquatus, for Scipio and Camillus of ancient Rome, could have thought of nominating to such an office the Spaniard Don Micheletto, the assassin, the strangler, the confidant of Valentinois, the very man whom but a short time before the Republic had made prisoner and sent to Julius II. as a monster of iniquity, an enemy of God and of man? Yet so it was. It is true that at first this choice aroused some jealousy in the magistrates and citizens, not, however, because of any moral repugnance, but only from dread lest Soderini should wish to use this man as a dangerous engine of tyranny. Machiavelli, who had been commissioned to dexterously probe the intentions of Francesco Gualterotti, G. B. Ridolfi, and Piero Guicciardini, and ascertain if the Ten would consent to nominate Don Michele, with a hundred men, as Bargello del Contado, found them little favourable to the idea; but on this proposal being laid before the Eighty, it was finally carried after being thrice put to the vote.[1]

Both in Romagna and in Rome Machiavelli had had many opportunities of knowing what manner of man Don Michele was. He had seen him under Valentinois in command of men picked up in the country, and who, although neither mercenaries, nor soldiers by trade, acquitted themselves of their duties uncommonly well; he therefore deemed the man adapted to maintain order and discipline among the raw Florentine militia. He was not ignorant of the many crimes and iniquities committed by him, for these were known to all the world, but considered that for the purpose in view the man's reputation for cruelty

among the "Carte del Machiavelli," and were first published by Passerini in the "Periodico di Numismatica e Sfragistica," vi year, No. vi pp 303-6; Florence, Ricci, 1874. These were afterwards republished, almost entire, by Nitti, *op. cit*, vol. i. p. 340 and fol. From the "Machiavelli Papers" it is evident that as early as 1504 he wrote upon the subject of the militia to Cardinal Soderini, who, among other letters, replied to him in one dated the 29th of May of the same year. See case iii No. 57.

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxix. p. 323.

foot soldiers under the flag. In January and February his activity must have been prodigious, for we find him in a different place every day.[1] He returned to Florence about the middle of March, and continued his work by means of a very extensive correspondence.[2] At the earliest date possible, namely in the February of the same year, a review was held of 400 men, who, dressed in gay uniforms and well-armed, were marched into the Piazza of the Signoria, and produced a most favourable impression upon the citizens; this experiment being repeated from time to time, the popularity of the new militia continually increased.[3] As we have already seen, some of these foot soldiers were even sent to Pisa, but failing to acquit themselves particularly well, Don Michele received orders to unite them with his company.[4] And although even then no very great results were attained, still in August some skirmishes took place which were not altogether unsuccessful.[5]

In any case, the militia being now an accomplished fact, and already in favour with the people, it was necessary to give it definite legal sanction. It was for this reason that Machiavelli drew up the Report to which we have frequently referred. In this he stated that throughout the territories of the Republic, in all towns possessing a Podestà, a company had been levied, and a Constable nominated for every three, four, or five companies. There were altogether thirty companies (each with its own flag) and eleven Constables. More than five thousand men had been inscribed on the lists, but this number might be reduced by dismissing the less able-bodied among them; twelve thousand had been already passed in review at Florence.[6] The Report then went on to prove the necessity of appointing a fresh magistrate entrusted with the regular enrolment of the militia. On 6th of December, 1506, a decree was passed in the Great Council, by a majority of 841 black beans against 317 white, for the creation of *Nove ufficiali dell' ordinanza e milizia fiorentina*, more generally known as *The Nine of the Militia*; and this decree was in fact nothing more than the official sanction to all

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. pp. 56–58; "Opere" (P.M.), vol v. p. 141.

[2] Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti," p 284 and fol.

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," pp 324–25; "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p. 147, note 2.

[4] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No 121, at sheet 1t (already quoted).

[5] See numerous letters in the Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, Nos. 120 and 121.

[6] At this passage of the Report there was the addition: *Et ne havete mandati 500 in campo.* These words were afterwards erased, perhaps in order to avoid recalling that the trials made of the militia had not always been successful.

with one conscience. This conscience should be personified in the commander, should render his conduct the higher and more intelligent manifestation, as it were, of the common thought; should render his very severity an act of justice. But whether as regarded armies or governments, Machiavelli had no perception of the need of any such unity. The people of his Republic should be virtuous; but in his opinion the people had little individual conscience; it was as softest clay in the hands of the statesman, who might mould it in any form he would, if he only knew his own intentions and how to carry them out unchecked by scruples of any kind. Machiavelli is either atrociously calumniated or misunderstood by those who pretend that he neither loved nor admired virtue. We often find him repeating that "no mortal man can fail to love it, to admire it," and his words in virtue's praise often rise to a degree of eloquence, which is evidently born of genuine conviction, rather than of rhetorical art. But for Machiavelli, as for his age in general, morality was an entirely individual and personal matter; the art of governing, commanding, ruling, was not opposed to, but entirely independent of it. The idea of a public conscience and morality is intelligible only to one already having that conception of social unity and personality, which clearly teaches us that for nations as for individuals true government is self-government, with the inevitable accompaniment of responsibility. This idea was unknown to the fifteenth century, and never quite apparent even to the intellect of Machiavelli. To the mind of the Middle Ages all historical events, all social transformations were expressions of the Divine Will, which man could neither assist or prevent; for Machiavelli, on the contrary, the social fact had become a human and a rational fact, of which he sought to discover the laws, but for him also the vicissitudes of history seemed almost always the exclusive work of princes or of generals. It is for this reason that the weight which he attributes to the arts of the statesman, to his determination and foresight, to the institutions and laws which he may create—given the required genius and energy—is almost unlimited.

Thus he had no difficulty in persuading himself that the new military system, planned by him on Swiss[1] and Roman models, must—if faithfully and severely followed—produce infallible results. No sooner had he convinced the Gonfaloniere of this, than at the end of December, 1505, he began to journey through Tuscany, furnished with letters patent, for the purpose of enrolling

[1] Guicciardini, at p 324 of his "Storia Fiorentina," tells us that the infantry were drilled "after the Swiss fashion." Machiavelli had then had many opportunities of studying in Italy the Swiss and German militia.

and he added, in continuation, that it was long since the Republic had done so worthy a thing as this, which was all owing to Machiavelli.[1] And such being the opinion of the most influential citizens, it cannot surprise us, that he, the acknowledged author of this important reform, should look to the future with the strongest hopefulness. Certainly his hopes could not all be fulfilled, in part indeed could only prove to be noble and generous illusions; nevertheless in after years they became the source of imperishable glory to the Republic. For when in 1527 Florence found herself beset and beleaguered by innumerable foes, the followers of Savonarola reawakened her ancient love of liberty, and the resuscitated Republic was heroically defended by the very Militia first proposed and instituted by Niccolò Machiavelli.

[1] "Periodico di Numismatica e Sfragistica," *loc. cit.*



the proposals brought forward by Machiavelli. The Nine—who were selected from among the members of the Great Council—held office for eight months at a time, and were charged with the enlistment of the men, their armament, drill, and instruction in discipline, their punishments, the appointment of Constables, &c.; but, on war being declared, the Militia would pass under the control of the Ten.[1] The same decree instituted a Captain of the Guard for the territory and district of Florence, with thirty mounted crossbow-men and fifty paid soldiers. This officer was to be subordinate to the Nine, and elected like other *condottieri*, with this difference, however, that "no native of Florence, of Florentine territory or district, nor of any place within forty miles of the Florentine border, could be nominated to the post."[2] The Nine were duly elected on the 10th of January, 1507, were sworn in on the 12th, and entered upon their duties on the 13th. This decree authorized them to have one or more chancellors, and, as was natural, they immediately fixed upon Machiavelli. By decrees of the 9th and 27th of February they then nominated Don Michele Captain of the Guard, both for the territory and district, with the thirty mounted archers and the fifty foot soldiers granted by law.[3]

Machiavelli's life now passes into a new phase, during which he was increasingly convinced that it was his special mission to restore the old military glories, the old virtues not of Florence alone but of all Italy. He had not been the first to conceive this hope, but he was now the only man who preserved it. Cardinal Soderini expressed a very general opinion when in writing to Machiavelli from Bologna on the 15th of December, 1506, he said: "We really believe that this Ordinance (of the Militia) *sit a Deo*, since it daily increases and flourishes, in spite of malignant opposition;"

[1] With regard to this arrangement, Machiavelli says in his Report: "And thus they would have no decided Chief of their own, and would recognize a public and not a private superior." Always the usual distrust.

[2] See the "Provvisione" in the "Opere," vol. iv. p. 427 and fol. The words quoted above are at p. 444.

[3] The decision of the 27th of February is in the Florentine Archives, cl. xiii. dist. 2, No. 70 ("Deliberazioni dei IX di Ordinanza" at sheet 9t). The first Register of the "Deliberazioni dei Nove," from 1505 to 1511 (Florence Archives, cl. xiii. dist. 2, No. 70) is written throughout in Machiavelli's own hand. It was so certain beforehand, that he would, in any case, be nominated Chancellor of the Nine, that on the 28th December, 1506, Agostino Vespucci, one of his coadjutors, wrote to him to beg that he also might be transferred to the service of the Nine, who, besides the Chancellor, were to have one or more *employés*. "I pray you to kindly think of me on this occasion, and should you perceive that I might be more useful (under the Nine) than in this my present office, pray contrive matters in such wise, that I may become one of those coadjutors, cum pro certo habeam, fore ut tu sis Cancellarius illorum Novem, ni locum tuearis quo nunc frueris, quod Deus avertat." ("Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No. 93.)

ending with the sack of Rome and the siege of Florence, it is easy to recognize not only a relation, but a certain harmony between these two orders of facts. When, however, we find that during the same period, poems such as those of Ariosto and an infinite number of comedies, romances, satires, and sonnets were given to the world, we can discern a very singular contrast of opposing elements. In fact, it was now that the Italian Renaissance displayed the infinite variety of its brightest radiance. This was manifested, not only in a thousand fresh forms of national prose and verse, but reached its highest strength in those studies of the Beautiful determining the culture of this essentially artistic age, and stamping it with their special mark.

It was as though a new spring had breathed fresh life into the soil and caused it to generate a multitude of flowers hitherto unseen of man—flowers which, opening their petals to the fertilizing rays of the sun shining down on them from above, gave forth an exquisite fragrance, a harmony of tints exciting the rapture of all beholders. While on the one side the furies of war and rapine were let loose on the world, on the other, celestial music seemed to announce that the Gods were again coming down to tread the earth with men.

The names of Leonardo, Raffaello, Michel Angelo are certainly enough for the glory of a single nation, the grandeur of a single age. Thanks to their immortal works, and especially to their paintings, Italy rose to a height attained by no other land. Beauty like unto this—even as that of Greek sculpture—cannot be twice born into the world, inasmuch as having become immortal it can neither be repeated nor reproduced Florence was certainly the cradle and chief school of these masters, but as their most marvellous works were accomplished in Rome, the age had a Pope for its sponsor, and was called the age of Leo X. Yet, although this Pontiff was one of the Medici house to whom the fine arts owed so much, and although he, too, was a great Mæcenas, he has usurped a fame far beyond his deserts Raffaello and Michel Angelo received their chief commissions from Julius II., and it was during his reign that they completed the magnificent paintings and sculptures, making Rome a sanctuary of art, and a perennial goal of pilgrimage to all civilized peoples from every part of the globe. Julius II. not only ordered and recompensed these works, but yearned for them, and urged them on with an ardour special to himself, so that at last, and with good reason, modern writers are beginning to designate the age by his name rather than by that of Leo X.[1]

[1] Treating of this subject in one of his "Pensieri," Gino Capponi observed



CHAPTER IX.

The age of Julius II —Fine Arts—Leonardo da Vinci—Michel Angelo—Raffaello —The new literature—Ariosto—The early writings of Francesco Guicciardini



THE decade during which Pope Julius II. occupied the chair of St. Peter (1503–1513) was a memorable period in Italian history, and still more memorable in Italian culture. This sexagenarian Pontiff kept all Europe in a ferment by his indomitable energy, by his more than youthful ardour, by his fixed determination to reconquer the provinces which, as he thought, had been unjustly wrested from the Church, and to increase the extent and power of the Papal States.

Holding in his grasp the guiding threads of the world's policy, he twisted them this way and that, now to the advantage, now to the hurt, of Italy, which thus became the field of mighty conflicts, bringing irreparable calamities in their train. The gigantic proportions which these events almost instantaneously assumed, naturally made a deep impression on the minds of all men with eyes to discern what was going on around them. Hence the notable growth of culture and added splendour of all literary works, particularly on politics and history, in which the Italians gave proof of insuperable originality, and became the teachers of Europe.

When it is remembered that the writings of Machiavelli and Guicciardini were composed in the midst of the bloody cataclysm beginning with the battles of Agnadello, Ravenna, and Pavia, and

moment that the literature of Italy began to take shape, the individual genius of a Giotto, an Arnolfo, and a Niccolò Pisano, the personality of the artists, and the speciality of the three sister arts just setting forth on their glorious career, became clearly accentuated. Of this revolution the chief factors were the study of nature, and the study of antiquity now revived with as much potency in Italian art as in Italian letters. In the cathedral of Florence and in Giotto's bell-tower the observer will not find the Greek or the Roman style, but neither will he find the Gothic. It is as though a classical framework of greater solidity and symmetry, well hidden within these structures, were forcing them to essential diversity. The innumerable sculptures and carved decorations become transformed amid those layers and incrustations of marble which, as a modern writer expresses it,[1] are the mortal enemies of the Gothic. The horizontal line prevails to a far greater extent, forests of slender columns are bound in sheaves, fantastic curves are simplified, and the heavenward spring is arrested; for here, the gaze of man seems again directed to earth. Out of these classic and Gothic elements, to which Oriental forms are now joined and admirably assimilated, a new and complex style is born, of which the only fitting name is the Italian style. Contemplating the Florence cathedral, and seeing it suddenly crowned by Brunelleschi's dome, the beholder marvels less at the diversity of the two styles than at the ease with which they are harmonized together. The classic cupola seems to be naturally evolved from the very heart of the wondrous temple, within which, hidden and invisible, lurked the germ of so strangely diverse an art.

This, in fact, was the art that triumphed when a new spirit, as it were, came to animate the Italian art of the fifteenth century, endowing it with a shape and physiognomy only apparently opposed to the preceding schools, and in reality evolved from them and following the same guides which had built them up: *i.e.*, nature and the antique. In literature we have noted the same facts, with this difference, that unlike the fine arts it had to pass through a period of apparent immobility, during which the influence of the Latin world almost suspended the development of the Italian. But the arts, on the contrary, though with altered direction, never abandoned their upward path.

[1] Jacob Burckhardt. Both in this author's work, "Geschichte der Renaissance in Italien" (Stuttgart, 1868), chiefly treating of architecture, and his other book, "Der Cicerone" (dritte Auflage. Leipzig, Seemann, 1874), an artistic Guide to Italy, there are many most weighty and original judgments and observations.

Up to this point we have had no occasion to speak of the fine arts, inasmuch as they had no visible influence on the character or intellect of Machiavelli. When in Rome he never made a single remark on the grandeur of the ancient or contemporary works before his eyes. Neither did those surrounding him in Florence ever seem to arouse his attention, for no word of his records the great artistic events taking place there in the century's first decade. Yet these events were mainly owed to the initiation of the Gonfalonier, Soderini, whose government gave a great impulse to the arts, and warmly fostered them after their long neglect under Piero dei Medici and during Savonarola's rule. It is now necessary to accord them a moment's attention, not only because, directly or indirectly, all citizens and magistrates of Florence took part in the new works in course of execution there, but because these works exercised so universal an influence upon Italian culture, so precisely determined its course and nature that they must have had at least some indirect action on the character and intellect of Machiavelli. For the spirit informing these works was part of the very air men breathed, and in no wise different from that contemporaneously producing a similar transformation in letters. And although in the fine arts this transformation assumed a more concrete, more plastic form, and one that was more patent and intelligible, yet our knowledge of it also opens the way to a better comprehension of the character and value of the new literature. Let us consider the subject for a few moments.

During the Middle Ages painting and sculpture seemed to have become little more than a complement to architecture, with which they had joined hands, as though to form a single art, in the Gothic cathedral. Herein, not only the arts, but often the artists themselves, seemed to renounce all individuality by working together, without proclaiming their names. But at the same

that America should have borne the name of Christopher Columbus, and was given that of Amerigo Vespucci; the sixteenth century should have borne the name of Julius II., and was given that of Leo X. "Those who deserved secondary honour, took the first; two Florentines snatched it from two Genoese." (Capponi, "Scritti Editi ed Inediti," Florence, Barbèra, 1877, vol ii p 452)

The same thought is thus expressed by another modern writer: "Als den Grunder der Kirchenstaates betrachtet ihn (Julius II.) der politische Geschichtschreiber, als den wahren Papst der Renaissance preist ihn der Kunsthistoriker, und gibt ihm zugleich den Ruhmestitel zuruck, welchen unbilliger Weise sein Nachfolger Leo X. an sich gerissen hatte Das Zeitalter Julius II. ist das Heldenalter der Italienischen Kunst" (A. Springer, "Raffael und Michelangelo," p. 101. Leipzig, Seemann, 1877-78)

This is one of the best of recent works on the two great masters and on Italian art in the sixteenth century.

and fused by the predominating national spirit, frequently deprived Italian art of the severe organic unity to be found in Greek, and sometimes even in Gothic art; but undoubtedly it also gave birth to infinite variety and wider comprehensiveness.

The same results were effected in literature, and always through the same cause, namely, because the Italian national spirit imbibed at that time all the most diverse systems of literature, philosophy, art, and culture, and thus endued them with a new and more catholic unity. The creative genius of Italy seemed to have a power of assimilation capable of blending, under a new form, all that the East and the West, Paganism and Christianity, had been able to bring forth. But before all these elements could form a new organism, animated by a new spirit, there inevitably occurred a preparatory period, during which the dissimilar elements remained clearly distinguishable. Little by little they met and joined, and the first link to bind them closer together was, of necessity, plastic, exterior, essentially artistic, descriptive, and pictorial; hence, painting became the chief art of the age. To Italian art, therefore, pertains the lasting glory of having possessed sufficient insight and width of sympathy to become the expression, the sentient and living personification of an intellectual microcosm. This new and plastic harmony then appeared to all men as a manifestation of the internal harmony already established in the spirit of mankind. The world seemed to be illuminated by an unwonted flood of light, shedding comfort on men in the midst of mortal disaster It was the light of Italian literature and art, heralding the decease of the Middle Ages, the birth of a new era.

This art, however, never lost the memory of its first origin; never ceased to feel its effects. No sooner did the creative force of art slacken with the national decadence than the diversity of its primitive elements began to reappear, to fall at last into the abyss of the *barocco*. No similar fate befell either Greek or Gothic art. They instead died a natural death, the death of exhaustion, without ever experiencing a period of tumultuous anarchy, such as the Italian went through, especially in the last century, inasmuch as their primitive elements were simpler and less varied.

Florentine art clearly proves to us how these different elements were fused and blended together, and what enormous variety was thus engendered, particularly in painting. From the meeting and mixture of the deep religious fervour that we praise in the Trecento, with classic Grecian beauty and an accurate study of nature, was born a new and exquisite refinement of ideal,

Painting in particular daily acquired greater force, originality, and independence, immensely aided by the use of the new medium, oil, brought to Italy by Flemish masters. In fact, painting now took the lead in art, not merely through the multiplicity and variety of its productions, nor because Italian genius found in painting its amplest and completest manifestation, but also because it communicated to the sister arts—and almost indeed imposed on them—its own special stamp.

By the genius of Brunelleschi, the student of Rome's ancient monuments, and the efforts of Leon Battista Alberti, no less a scholar than an artist, architecture was revived according to classical models. Like all edifices of the Italian Renaissance, the churches and palaces built by these men, however closely they may approach to the antique, are never servile reproductions of it. Lines and forms apparently identical with those of Greek and Roman art, acquired an expression and significance of a totally dissimilar kind. The ornate, by developing much variety and novelty of form, assumed great prominence now that, as we have noted, the picturesque was the predominant characteristic of all art, and had become the recognized aim even of architecture.

Florentine sculpture, led by Donatello, the Della Robbia, and Ghiberti, kept pace with the movement in study of nature and the antique. An expression of renewed youth, unusual energy, virgin freshness of form and movement, abounded in all things. While Brunelleschi manifested an iron strength of soul in the hardihood and austere simplicity of lines disdaining all Gothic ornamentation, Donatello succeeded in endowing his statues with so much force, originality, and *naiveté* of expression, that both artists may be said to be inspired by an identical spirit. And even in Donatello we discern, though less clearly than in the gracious prettiness, and varied, multi-coloured decorations of Luca della Robbia, the predominance of the picturesque, now the fundamental artistic idea both of the nation and the age. It was this idea that, by breathing new life into classic art, transformed and rejuvenated it. The bas-reliefs of Ghiberti's gates have often the effect of paintings; those of Donatello occasionally condescend to the imitation of works drawn in outline. Certain of Mino da Fiesole's sculptured portraits resemble paintings by the Flemish masters who, thanks to the commercial intercourse between the two countries, contributed to the constituent elements of Italian art. In more than one instance we can plainly trace the effect produced on Florentine artists by the example of the immortal works of the brothers Van Eyck. The introduction of such diverse styles and elements, although marvellously absorbed

instance, it cannot be said that Fra Bartolommeo Porta (147
1517) was possessed of real genius. He has neither the intellectu
force and fancy, nor the originality needed to establish that tit
But his breadth of style, the grand and complex harmony of h
compositions, his softness of expression, appear to the behold
to prelude the destined coming of Raffaello. In the same w
the forcible draughtsmanship displayed by Luca Signorelli
the Orvieto Cathedral, his audacious grouping, his freely flyi
figures, foretold, if in shadowy fashion, Michel Angelo's Sisti
Chapel. Art itself would seem now and then to begin the wo
of genius before the individual man of genius appears upon t
stage. In fact, it is always the unconscious labour of many pione
that prepares and smoothes the way for the one great man, w
at last arises, equipped with complete power and full consciousn
of his own might The temple once finished, there only lac
the Divinity who is to inhabit its shrine and irradiate it by h
presence, but the rustling of his pinions is always to be hea
beforehand.

The great revolution was accomplished between the close of t
fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first m
to prove himself of genuinely superior genius, capable of givi
organic unity to the work already accomplished by the nation
spirit, and leading it to a definite goal, was Leonardo da Vi
(1452-1519). His master, Andrea del Verrocchio, also posses
great versatility of talent. Painter, sculptor, most skil
goldsmith, a lover of music and of horses, he was also
scientific student, and had from his youth given much time
geometry and perspective. In some of the heads he painted,
note a singular grace and remarkable study of expression; b
these were the very qualities in which he was far outstripped
his pupil. All know the story relating how the master f
disheartened on seeing the angel painted by the young Leonar
in a corner of his picture

In fact, Da Vinci at once stepped forward as one of Natur
privileged few, as one sent into the world to accomplish gre
deeds His mental no less than his physical parts were admirab
and harmoniously constituted Strong and handsome in perso
he vanquished all competitors in athletic exercises, and h
universal intelligence enabled him to attain equal excellence
every branch of study. Engineer and naturalist, inventor
machines and mathematician, initiator of the experimental metho
observer and discoverer of natural phenomena, writer on art a
an excellent artist in every respect, he was, above all, supreme as
painter. The inventive restlessness of his mind urged him

aerial form that might be styled supernatural, were it not visibly grounded upon nature. This hitherto unknown type of beauty seems almost the germ of the new art; it is the creative power calling it to life. The first painter of this new school was Masaccio (1401–29), a glorious youth, whose life history is almost unknown to us. He disappeared from the world after completing a small number of works to show the path by which all were to follow him. Together with heads which seem photographed from life, we find majestic figures wrapped in noble, broad-folded draperies recalling the toga and chlamys of ancient statuary. Landscape, architecture, all nature enter into his pictures and help to constitute the new painting of the fifteenth century, in which everything finds a place. For a considerable time, however, Florentine artists continued to devote their attention, each to some special branch of art, almost each to the solution of some special problem This one studied perspective; that one anatomy; another drew from life with realistic fidelity; his neighbour studied the antique, or sought new types and new expressions; while his friend gave infinite care to the composition of architectural or landscape subjects as backgrounds to his pictures And all have a fineness, a grace and elegance, clearly proving the artistic genius of the whole nation It was a strange and sudden flowering which, beginning in the valley of the Arno, spread round Florence and rapidly extended throughout Italy, breathing fresh life into all it touched, everywhere creating new forms and schools of art. Well may Gregorovius exclaim that had the Italy of the Renaissance produced nothing more than her painting, that alone would suffice to make her immortal.[1]

The universality and national unity of this great and varied labour daily became more evident. Artists obtained an ever-increasing freedom of touch and power of expression, their ideas, nay, the men themselves, soared to higher levels. The solemn birth hour of art was at hand, and, as always happens at the turning-points of history, the men of genius, Titans of the immortal work that Italy was about to accomplish, were already prepared and eager for the task All were either born or educated in Florence during Gonfalonier Soderini's term of office; but it was their part to transform Florentine into Italian art, and make Rome the art-capital and scene of their greatest achievements. All things heralded their advent; sometimes it almost seemed as though their presence was felt while as yet they were unborn. For

[1] "So wurde das allein hingereicht haben, ihm die geistige Unsterblichkeit zu sichern." Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. viii. p. 145, Stuttgart, 1872.

instance, it cannot be said that Frà Bartolommeo Porta (1475–1517) was possessed of real genius. He has neither the intellectual force and fancy, nor the originality needed to establish that title. But his breadth of style, the grand and complex harmony of his compositions, his softness of expression, appear to the beholder to prelude the destined coming of Raffaello In the same way the forcible draughtsmanship displayed by Luca Signorelli in the Orvieto Cathedral, his audacious grouping, his freely flying figures, foretold, if in shadowy fashion, Michel Angelo's Sistine Chapel. Art itself would seem now and then to begin the work of genius before the individual man of genius appears upon the stage In fact, it is always the unconscious labour of many pioneers that prepares and smoothes the way for the one great man, who at last arises, equipped with complete power and full consciousness of his own might The temple once finished, there only lacks the Divinity who is to inhabit its shrine and irradiate it by his presence, but the rustling of his pinions is always to be heard beforehand

The great revolution was accomplished between the close of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first man to prove himself of genuinely superior genius, capable of giving organic unity to the work already accomplished by the national spirit, and leading it to a definite goal, was Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519). His master, Andrea del Verrocchio, also possessed great versatility of talent. Painter, sculptor, most skilful goldsmith, a lover of music and of horses, he was also a scientific student, and had from his youth given much time to geometry and perspective In some of the heads he painted, we note a singular grace and remarkable study of expression; but these were the very qualities in which he was far outstripped by his pupil. All know the story relating how the master felt disheartened on seeing the angel painted by the young Leonardo in a corner of his picture.

In fact, Da Vinci at once stepped forward as one of Nature's privileged few, as one sent into the world to accomplish great deeds. His mental no less than his physical parts were admirably and harmoniously constituted Strong and handsome in person, he vanquished all competitors in athletic exercises, and his universal intelligence enabled him to attain equal excellence in every branch of study. Engineer and naturalist, inventor of machines and mathematician, initiator of the experimental method, observer and discoverer of natural phenomena, writer on art and an excellent artist in every respect, he was, above all, supreme as a painter. The inventive restlessness of his mind urged him to

perpetual research in newer and harder problems of art and science: to study these ardently so long as there was any difficulty to conquer, and then to throw them aside as soon as they were conquered.[1] For this reason he left a large number of unfinished works, and many scarcely begun; while not a few of his conceptions and discoveries were merely jotted down in numerous note-books, some of which are still extant.

Yet his finished pictures and the map of designs he has left us, suffice for his enduring fame, suffice to prove his immense influence upon art and upon the most celebrated artists of his age. By anatomical research he gained exact knowledge of every movement of the human figure; he applied himself with unflinching industry to the perception, invention, and reproduction of the most varied expressions—comic, tragic, severe, and serene—of the human countenance Through his labours design became — especially in the Florentine school — the potent and independent means of expressing the most exalted thoughts, the most subtle emotions of the soul Leonardo reached so supreme an excellence in draughtsmanship and brush work, in faithfulness of portraiture, and in vivacity and novelty of expression, that his figures seem to be living, breathing creatures. The chief aim of his whole artistic career was to produce an ideal type of superhuman loveliness, the exposition of a divine smile such as we find in many of his faces. This smile is especially noticeable in the Gioconda, and it is related that Da Vinci caused cheerful music to be played while he was painting, in order to give his model the expression that has immortalized her. Such is the life and truthfulness of this work that the beholder almost expects the eyes to move, the lips to speak.

All who examine Leonardo's note-books can read in them the history of his most unique mind. Next to ideal countenances wearing, nearly all, that smile of the Gioconda, a smile never entirely free from a certain ironical subtlety, are grotesque, tragic, horribly monstrous heads. But even in his strangest, most fantastic freaks, natural laws are always observed. Given the idea, given the meaning of the first strokes, the rest of the figure follows as a logical sequence; each type, whether divinely ideal or horribly grotesque, maintains an admirable unity and artistic truth. And beside these sketches we find now a design for an hydraulic machine, then some mathematical problem or anatomical study, investigations as to the flight of birds, philosophic maxims,

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new plans of fortification. So fervent was his zeal for universal research, that he conceived the most daring enterprises: as, for instance, of lifting by machinery the Baptistry of St John in Florence, and of diverting the course of the Arno. There were moments when he no longer acknowledged any limits to the power of human inquiry and human science, as is proved by his remarkable and well-known letter to Lodovico the Moor. Even in his pictures he was always seeking new combinations of colour, some of which, blackening with age, have spoilt the most beautiful portions of his paintings. His Cenacolo is now completely ruined by the ravages of time. This work, finished in the closing years of the fifteenth century, still preserves some faintly visible traces of its more than human beauty; and with the aid of existing prints we may see that the Cenacolo alone was sufficient for one man's fame, and to mark the inauguration of a new epoch in art. The effect of the Saviour's words—"One of you shall betray Me"—is so marvellously rendered in the facial expressions of the twelve apostles, that the work is a genuine psychologic poem. It is true that the composition, being divided into groups, two on either side of the Christ seated in the centre, with His air of unalterable calm, has something of the stiffness and uniformity of the *Quattrocentisti*. But, as a modern writer has justly observed, the divine merit of this work consists in the fact that even its most studied and calculated effects seem spontaneous, necessary, and inevitable. In this composition a mighty genius displays its inexhaustible treasures, and brings into harmony the contrasts of expression it has created. Thus a subject, so long almost reduced to a conventionality became original, by force of the new spirit infused into it. With this masterpiece, sixteenth-century painting sprang into existence, and had little left to learn save some greater freedom of movement and variety of combination. These improvements were happily essayed by Leonardo himself in his Adoration of the Magi, in Florence, which he did not care to finish on seeing that he had succeeded in his purpose. He used the same treatment in another celebrated work executed immediately after his return from Milan, and that was almost entirely destroyed.

At Florence, in 1504, all seemed prepared for one of the greatest triumphs of art—a triumph, indeed, already begun, and that Leonardo could only hasten, by proving to the compeers now assembled on the banks of the Arno the might of his own genius. The youthful Raffaello had started from Urbino to come to Florence where Michel Angelo Buonarotti (1475–1564) had already completed some of the stupendous works that were such valuable factors in the special character of sixteenth-century art

perpetual research in newer and harder problems of art and science: to study these ardently so long as there was any difficulty to conquer, and then to throw them aside as soon as they were conquered.[1] For this reason he left a large number of unfinished works, and many scarcely begun; while not a few of his conceptions and discoveries were merely jotted down in numerous note-books, some of which are still extant.

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now moved to the Loggia dei Lanzi, where it stands to this day, and its place filled, as though for the guardianship of the palace, by the David with his sling. The difficulty of transport was overcome by the ingenuity of Giuliano and Antonio San Gallo, and so excellent was their method that when a few years ago it became necessary to protect the statue from further injuries from time and exposure, by removing it to a place of shelter, the progress of mechanics proved unable to suggest to the scientific and artistic committee charged with the task of removal any better plan than that formerly employed by the brothers San Gallo. Indeed, after much fruitless deliberation, it seemed almost like a happy and striking discovery none had thought of before.[1] Suspended in a wooden cage, so that it might yield gently to the jar of movement, the Giant was mounted upon wheels and successfully set in place. Then Michel Angelo gave it the finishing strokes under the eyes of Soderini, who often came to admire the work, and sometimes proffered advice that greatly tried the patience of the immortal artist.

The David stands proudly erect, his glance fixed on the enemy he has just struck down. Concentrated purpose keeps him motionless and apparently tranquil; but he seems to pant for breath, and the almost convulsive movement of his nostrils testifies to his inward agitation. The right hand pendent by his side holds a stone; the left, with forearm bent, is raised to the shoulder, grasping the sling ready to receive another missile. Thus the whole figure was won from the long and shapeless block. Wholly nude, this colossal youth presents himself to our gaze with a vigorous simplicity, significant of a power hitherto unknown in art. It is true that Donatello's armour-clad St. George has an austere loftiness that strikes awe in the beholder. But he shrinks into insignificance beside the new Giant, in whose grandiose form, almost too daring lines, and omnipotent calm, patient observation finds the revelation of its creator's might. This statue inaugurated a thorough revolution in art. Every mediæval tradition was broken, every conventional form of the Quattrocento surpassed. The antique, substantially changed, had been born again in the new and spontaneous production of the modern artist. On the 8th of September, 1504, the statue was at last exhibited to the public, and the public applauded it with a warmth never excited by any previous work of art. For all

[1] On this subject reference can be made to the documents published by A. Gotti in his "Vita di M. Buonarotti narrata con l'aiuto di nuovi documenti" Florence: Printing Office of the *Gazzetta d'Italia*, 12th September, 1875, vol. ii. p. 35 and fol.

This master, after studying painting under Ghirlandaio, and sculpture in the Medici gardens near St. Mark's, showed the power of his brush at the age of twenty-three by his Pietà group in St. Peter's at Rome. Completed during the period when Leonardo was engaged on his Cenacolo, this work also has something of the Quattrocento; but only in so far as the new school now constituted still preserved certain reminiscences of that of the Della Robbia, Donatello, and Verrocchio, who had given it birth. And in this case such reminiscences were an advantage. The unity of grouping, the harmony of *ensemble*, the originality of conception, the forlornness of the dead Christ, joined with the noble reverence of the mother, whose expression of mournful austerity has a delicacy and grace which Michel Angelo never again achieved, any more than he could reproduce the same finish and chasteness of design—all these things at once placed him among the first artists of the age. Dante's poems, Savonarola's sermons, his studies of the antique, the natural growth of art, and his own irrestrainable fancy impelled him farther and farther on the new path, beyond all remembrance of his first masters. His David, known to Florentines as "The Giant," marked his first step on this path.

On returning from Rome, in 1501, after serious contemplation of ancient art, he was pressed by the stewards of the cathedral works to attempt to carve a statue from an enormous block of marble which they had never been able to turn to account. Other artists had tried in vain to make use of it, but only succeeded in further injuring the block. Being eighteen feet in length and disproportionately narrow, it so nearly resembled a pillar that to give movement to any figure hewed from it seemed an impossibility. Michel Angelo consented, and willingly undertook the daring enterprise confided to him by the Republic in the August of the same year. In January, 1504, the statue was completed, only needing a few finishing strokes after being raised on its pedestal. At the close of a lengthy dispute among the first artists of Florence—and therefore of the age—as to its site, and the method of transporting the colossal mass, Michel Angelo's own idea carried the day. This was that the David should stand in front of the Palace of the Signoria, in place of Donatello's group of Judith and Holofernes. In 1495 the Florentines, having expelled the Medici, had removed this group from the Palace courtyard, and raised it on the terrace with the inscription: "Exemplum sal. pub. cives posere MCCCCXCV.," as a symbol of liberty overcoming tyranny.[1] It was

[1] See my former work, "History of Girolamo Savonarola and his Times," vol. 1 p. 281.

and that no other genius could ever equal it." We ought to believe him, he adds, because "all those who studied from that cartoon, and designed similar subjects, became excellent artists"[1] And Cellini tells us that this was the first great work in which Michel Angelo put forth all his marvellous strength, "with so many splendid movements that no work was ever seen, either ancient or modern, attaining to so high a degree of excellence." In his opinion it was even superior to the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Regarding the other cartoon, he remarks, that "the admirable Leonardo da Vinci had chosen to delineate a cavalry skirmish, with an assault on the standards as divinely executed as words may express."[2] These cartoons, he says in conclusion, were the school of the world; and, in fact, tradition tells us that Rodolfo Ghirlandaio, Andrea del Sarto, Francesco Granacci, and Raffaello d'Urbino were numbered among the many artists who studied from them.[3] Neither work has not the solemn calm we admire in the Pietà, in the David, and in the Cenacolo; on the contrary, both depict the most stirring energy of action, movement, and life. In Leonardo's cartoon, so great is the fury of the fight, that horses as well as men are engaging one another in mortal combat. And in Michel Angelo's, as we see by the engravings, there is no figure that is not a masterpiece of action and *ensemble*. Draughtsmanship had at last succeeded in not only rendering human form and expression; but also the very tumult of life's passions, in all their infinite variety. The human form, so laboriously studied during several centuries by so many generations of artists, at last stood out from the canvas, and freely moved in space. Art and artist had alike achieved independence; Prometheus had ravished fire from heaven, and given life to his creation. Leonardo, having conquered the first difficulties, threw aside the work, and devoted himself, as usual, to the solution of novel and no less difficult art-problems. But Michel Angelo, although much influenced by Leonardo's genius, and although in some of his drawings showing diligent study of Leonardesque expression,[4] never imitated, and did not follow him through his ever-varying phases of fresh artistic enterprise. On the contrary, to his life's end he kept to

[1] "Vasari," the Le Monnier edition, vol xii. pp. 177–179.
[2] Cellini, "Vita," Le Monnier edition, 1852, pp. 22–23.
[3] Springer, however, denies that Leonardo's influence upon Raffaello is to be dated from the latter's study of these cartoons. In his opinion the Madonnas and portraits executed by Raffaello on his arrival in Florence, prove that the painter of Urbino had not yet acquired the grand manner that he afterwards adopted. Springer, *op cit.*, p. 57.
[4] This is especially noticeable in the drawings preserved at Oxford.

things conduced to gain it the popular favour: its colossal proportions, the new impulse it gave to sculpture, the new school it founded, and its position as guardian and defender of Florentine liberty.

We may say that from this moment the colossal figure of David led the march. In his other works Michel Angelo studied the novel attitudes and artistic gestures of a people of Titans, who, in a thousand different forms, seemed to leap forth from his restless imagination. He sought the supernatural, no longer in mere expression and gesture, but in exuberance of life, vigour, and action, and to that end applied himself to prolonged anatomical study. In the same year, neglecting smaller commissions, he began another work that was to be the second event in his life, and the history of art. Soderini had entrusted him and Leonardo with the task of covering with frescoes the two principal walls of the hall of the Great Council. Leonardo was already at work on his cartoon, and had drawn the fight of Anghiari. This was the battle of the 29th of June, 1440, in which the Florentines routed the forces of the Duke of Milan, under Niccolò Piccinini, a victory they afterwards commemorated by yearly horse-races. Michel Angelo's chosen subject was an episode of the lengthy war with Pisa. In these two works both masters measured their strength as it were, both touched supreme excellence, but hardly anything remains to us of either composition. Of Leonardo's we have only a bad copy by Rubens; while during the revolution of 1511 Michel Angelo's cartoon was torn into fragments, which were afterwards lost. Some old engravings of a portion of this work are, however, extant, and give us a fairly exact idea of it.[1] Still, in order to form any judgment of these works, we have to rely on the descriptions and criticisms of contemporary writers.

Michel Angelo had chosen the moment when the Florentine soldiers bathing in the Arno were startled by a call to arms There is marvellous life and beauty in the attitudes of the men hurriedly springing up the bank, dressing and seizing their weapons to hasten to the aid of their comrades, who have already begun the fight in the distance. Vasari tells us that all artists who came to admire this divine handiwork of Michel Angelo, declared, "that such divinity of art had never before been seen,

[1] We have engravings of some parts of the design by Marcantonio and Agostino Veneziano. At Lord Leicester's seat of Holkham Hall there is an old copy of the battle engraved by Schiavonetti and afterwards reproduced by Harford, but it is uncertain if it is an exact copy of the original. Springer suggests that it may have been composed with the aid of the fragments previously engraved.

period he painted a large number, seeking to give them the expression, at once human and divine, that is one of the most eminent merits and peculiar characteristics of his style. Studying his virgins, not only in his pictures, but also in his sketches, which are more numerous and frequently of equal beauty and originality, we can trace the gradual transformation of the Quattrocento Madonna, in adoration of the divine infant, into the happy mother contemplating her own child and joyfully treasuring him in her arms, it is a complete cycle of maternal love.[1] We feel and see the propinquity of Frà Bartolommeo, and the more remote presence of Leonardo, whose manner is distinctly visible even in the portraits, which, together with Virgin Mothers, constituted Raffaello's chief occupation while in Florence. It is impossible to look at his Maddalena Doni without calling to mind the Gioconda; and his portraits during this first period, in which no reminiscence of Leonardo can be traced, are much weaker and more tentative. Michel Angelo prepared himself for his gigantic Roman works by studying anatomy and the most daring postures and movements; Raffaello, on the other hand, first applied himself to expression and grace; then, by study of the two celebrated cartoons, the example of Frà Bartolommeo and the aid of his own genius, he finally devoted himself to great compositions Leonardo had been the first to strike out the new paths, which the other two rival geniuses quickly invaded and triumphantly pursued

And now, when Leonardo returned to Lombardy, Raffaello and Michel Angelo were summoned by Julius II. to Rome, which by his means became the literary and artistic capital of Italy, and consequently of the world. Here ancient and modern culture touched hands, Christianity and Paganism, all the diverse forms of the fine arts, seemed suddenly brought into substantial harmony. It was a solemn moment; the mind of man had just awakened to fullest consciousness of its own power in the harmonic unity of mankind's intellectual life; was inspired by a new happiness, and a divine confidence in its future. In the midst of this harmony, which seemed like music suddenly shed from heaven, there was an ever-increasing exuberance of grand creations of art, such as the world had never before, will never again, behold. New forms, new images, new types arose, in which Greek mythology and Christian sentiment, learning and inspiration, the real and the ideal, mingled together and joined in forming a world of art—a world revealing a

[1] "Durch Raffael ist das Madonnenideal Fleisch geworden." Springer, *op. cit.*, p. 58.

the path first traced by this cartoon, and in which he had first discovered his artistic freedom. He no longer dreaded any obstacle, either of form, material, or subject; for all things issued spontaneously from an imagination trained to obey solely those laws of art to which he subordinated everything. It is true that each day brought him face to face with fresh difficulties; but he was always ready to attack them with victorious vigour, and the struggle gave birth to ideas and creations of increasing originality. His almost excessive exuberance of vitality prevented him from ever attaining to Leonardo's Olympian calm, and still less did it allow him to arrive at the serene harmony of Greek sculpture. In his more audacious works lies hidden the germ of the future corruption and decadence of Italian art, and the germ becomes plainly visible in the productions of his clumsy imitators.

In those days Raffaello Sanzio d'Urbino (1483–1520), pupil of Perugino, the chief representative of the Umbrian school, was already far advanced in his training. This school, inaugurated by the works of Giotto and his followers in the sanctuary of Assisi, was, notwithstanding certain eminent qualities peculiar to itself, in reality derived from the Florentine school, from which it constantly received fresh aliment. Raffaello himself, although remaining at Perugia until the end of the fifteenth century, was early in indirect communication with the art world of Florence, thanks to his master's frequent visits to that city. And even in his earliest works he showed little willingness to submit to all the conventional fetters of the Umbrian school, and displayed a native delicacy and originality capable of raising its standard to an unexpected level. But on coming to Florence (1504–6) he perceived that art had made a mighty stride, and lived in a new atmosphere of which he soon felt the effects. Study of Masaccio drew him nearer to Frà Bartolommeo della Porta, who at once led him beyond the Quattrocento. This master, whose influence over Raffaello was undoubtedly great, and who was the first to indirectly communicate to him certain qualities of Leonardo's manner, was, as we have already noted, a skilful harmonizer of broad masses of light and shade, and surpassed all other painters in the architectural grouping of his figures and in unity of composition; he also had great breadth of touch, especially in draperies, and a singular sweetness of expression, rendered still sweeter by the example of Leonardo. At a later period, about 1508, his colouring was much improved by a visit to Venice. The effect of Raffaello's sojourn in Florence was quickly visible in his Madonnas, of which at this

but it is not easy to discover the direct prompter of the noble theme, for the reason that it was in fact the thought of the age transmuted in Raffaello's mind into an art creation. In that alone consists the originality and individuality of this masterpiece, which no one else could have accomplished. The champions of religion disputing on the Sacrament and the real presence of God, the Greek philosophers discussing the highest scientific truths, Apollo and the Muses, Justinian, Tribonianus, and Pope Gregory IX, are all collected in the same room, all joined in the same artistic conception Neither do they present themselves to our eyes as mere faithful transcripts of historic and poetic personages of the past. No; they have risen from the grave, have come to life, beings real and breathing as the men around them. We may say that all the living Greek element that will live for ever in the world, now, after long burial and oblivion amid the misty sophisms of the schools, reappeared in its immortal youth, illumined by the rays of the Italian sun, which, sweeping away mediæval clouds, once more displayed to mortal eyes the peaks of Olympus clear cut against the azure Hellenian sky. If the creative might of genius endued this world evoked from past ages, these Divinities called back to earth, with the special colour of the age, and almost with a new nationality, what of that? It only brings them still nearer to ourselves. Italian art, joining past and present, and teaching us their harmony, exhibits in the gods and heroes of antiquity the human element they had in common with us; teaches us to find in them, as it were, a part of ourselves. This it is that constitutes the peculiar character and historical value of Italian art.

It would be impossible to describe in words the numerous works now completed by Raffaello with truly prodigious rapidity. He had touched the culminating point of his art, and was in the full vigour of his strength. Grandeur of composition, nobility of conception, breadth of colour, variety of style, skill in draughtsmanship, grace and harmony of colour, disputed the palm in his productions with a wealth of fertility such as the imagination can barely grasp.

The Stanza della Segnatura was succeeded by that of Heliodorus, this again by the Conflagration of Borgo, and finally by the Stanza of Constantine. Meanwhile, in the Loggie of the Vatican, new compositions, rapidly designed by the master's hand, were painted by his pupils on the vaulted ceilings and on the walls; fantastic arabesques inspired by the antique were reproduced in an ever-varying form, demonstrating another of the thousand aspects of the Renaissance spirit. Whenever the artist

nation's soul at the moment of its becoming, as it were, the conscience of the human race, the centre of light illumining the future. In this intellectual atmosphere, in presence of those mighty monuments of Rome and the Campagna, reducing to unbearable insignificance all things devoid of true grandeur, the minds of the great Tuscan artists were lifted to a higher plane and showed their greatest might.

Raffaello was in Rome in the September of 1508, after having already won his first laurels in heroic composition; but it was now that the smouldering fire of his genius suddenly shot up into liveliest flame. His was a genius revelling in spontaneous harmony, a genius developing without struggle, without pain, without uncertainties or obstacles of any kind. All loved him, all yielded to the fascination of his gracious nature. His prodigious creative strength was equalled by his power of assimilation, so that everything the various schools of Italian painting had brought forth was united and reproduced by him, as a new art, to which he imparted a grace and delicacy hitherto unconceived. His life was no conflict, but a happy and spontaneous intellectual evolution; his art was no effort, but a natural symphony. It uplifted the mind from which it emanated, no less than it uplifts the mind of him who contemplates it. We cannot pause to give prolonged consideration to all the more celebrated achievements of Raffaello's brush. That would lead us too far from Florence and from our principal theme. Fortunately, however, the great works of art of this decade are thoroughly known, and Raffaello's painting needs little comment: to see it is to understand it. We may, therefore, hurriedly pass on, only staying to note what is necessary to our aim. Between 1508 and 1511 the first of the Vatican Stanze was completed, that known as the Stanza of the Segnatura. These frescoes are a true poem. On the vaulted ceiling are symbolical figures of Philosophy, Theology, Poetry, and Jurisprudence; on the walls beneath are four great compositions—the School of Athens, the Dispute of the Sacrament, the Parnassus, and the representation of canonical and civil law. All the accessories, in every part of the Stanza, accord with this grand synthesis. It is hard to believe that it was conceived and put into shape by Raffaello alone, who at that time, being in his first youth and entirely devoted to the study of art, could not have possessed the varied knowledge required to compose and carry out the work with such admirable success Possibly he received no little assistance from Pope Julius II., who gave him the commission, and whose portrait is to be found in one of the frescoes. It is certain that contemporary scholars had some share in the work;

would uphold the sarcophagus in which was to repose the image of the slumbering Pontiff. Julius II. adopted the idea with so much enthusiasm, that, in order to find a suitable site for the monument, he determined to rebuild St. Peter's from its foundations, so as to make it the grandest temple of the Christian world. On the 11th of April, 1506, notwithstanding his advanced age, he went down a hazardous rope-ladder to a great depth, whither few dared accompany him, to lay the foundation-stone of the monstrous edifice. But the envy of rival artists, the eccentricity and impatience of the Pope, who perpetually gave him fresh commissions, compelled poor Michel Angelo to continually suspend his labours on the monument, and tormented him to such a degree, that, as he said in his letters: "It would have been better to set myself to the making of sulphur matches . . . Every day they stone me as though I had crucified Christ. . . . I have wasted all my youth bound to this sepulchre." Worst of all, the great work was never executed; all we have of it are the statues of two shackled prisoners, and the Moses. But in the latter work the whole soul of the great sculptor seems to live and breathe. In a sitting attitude, with one hand resting on the tables of the Law, the other grasping the long tresses of his beard, the Lawgiver appears to be fixing his indignant eyes on the worshippers of the golden calf. The low forehead with the two symbolic horns, the terrible glance, the colossal proportions—the entire figure, in short, is so awe-striking—that were Moses to rise to his feet, the whole people would take to headlong flight; none able to withstand the awful menace of his glance.

Instead of completing this monument, Michel Angelo was now compelled by the Pope to paint the vault of the Sistine Chapel, and only at a later date found leisure to finish the Moses. He began the ceiling in 1508, and towards the close of the following year, daily spurred on by the indomitable impatience of Julius II.—who once even threatened to throw him down from the scaffolding—he unveiled a considerable portion of it. In 1512 the whole was completed. Nothing like it had ever been seen in the world. The movements, the superhumanly grandiose lines, and artistic *motif* of every figure, display such terrific energy, that the vault seems about to open to give it more freedom of action. Some of the figures are moving, coming towards us, others soaring on high. The chapel enlarges as we gaze. We are no longer looking on a painted surface. Michel Angelo has peopled this ceiling with Titans The characters of Holy Writ, of history, allegory, sacred and Pagan tradition, are all transformed here. His fancy, discovering a mythology of its own, raised an

indulged in a short rest from the fatigue of fresco-painting, it was only to depict on panel or canvas other unrivalled gems of art Who could express in words how infinite a source of intellectual joy the Madonna Della Seggiola, and the still more beautiful Virgin of San Sisto, have been and will ever be to mankind? In these, the primitive type so carefully and studiously sought by Raffaello is enriched by more grandeur of composition and breadth of execution, without losing anything of its ineffable grace.

In 1509 the banker Chigi, finance minister to Julius II, charged Baldassan Peruzzi with the construction of a villa in Rome, and shortly afterwards (1514) Raffaello came there to paint his Galatea, and design the compositions for the legend of Psyche, executed by his pupils. So the little villa, at present known as the Farnesina, was converted into another temple of art. All who have had the good fortune to feast their eyes at leisure on these paintings, turn away with an intense desire to see them again, convinced of some mysterious charm in them potent to soothe the most troubled spirit.

Raffaello was unresting in labour, and his genius, instead of becoming exhausted, seemed to gain fresh strength in every new effort. But his physical force was of less enduring quality, and at the age of thirty-seven years he passed away while engaged on his Transfiguration. This, although finished by the hand of Giulio Romano, is always accepted as Raffaello's mightiest work, both for power of design and the Michelangelesque boldness of its figures and composition. At length he had submitted in some degree to the overmastering influence of the rival artist who was urging art to the more and more daring enterprises, more perilous heights from which it was finally cast down by feeble imitators lacking the power of the great man who knew how to observe necessary limits.

In order to form a just idea of the inexhaustible artistic fecundity of the first quarter of the sixteenth century, we must remember that, at the time when Raffaello was painting the Stanze and Loggie of the Vatican, Michel Angelo was engaged on the vault of the Sistine Chapel. The latter artist had already been commissioned by Julius II. to prepare for him a tomb of gigantic proportions, and instantly produced one of the most colossal designs ever conceived by the mind of man. It was to be an epic poem in marble, representing the spirit and might of the Papacy triumphing over all human limitations. About forty statues of marble and bronze were to be grouped on the steps of the enormous mass, on the summit of which heaven and earth

Olympus, which, although created by one man, seems the work of a whole nation, and will ever remain immortal in the kingdom of art, and the history of the human intellect.

Glancing at the *ensemble* of the various schools of art which we have rapidly noticed, it will be observed that while seemingly obedient only to the unshackled and almost capricious inspiration of individual artists, these schools were really evolved one from the other by an inevitable and logical process; so that their every development and aspiration reached their natural fulfilment in Raffaello and Michel Angelo, who, in raising art to its highest level, seemed only to amalgamate the labours of their predecessors. All appeared prepared, nay, predestined, for the lofty attainment. Julius II., when urging artists to noble tasks, became inspired by their ideas; took a very lively part in their most famous works, and promoted them with the feverish ardour of a mind imbued with true Roman greatness He was constantly on the scaffolding of the Sistine Chapel; he had a passage made to enable him to go straight from the Vatican to Michel Angelo's studio; he seemed to think that upon him lay the vast responsibility of leading Italian art to the topmost pinnacle of success. And the men and means needed for this end arose spontaneously on all sides. To Raffaello and Michel Angelo may be added Bramante, who, without entirely transporting architecture beyond the limits of the Quattrocento school, nevertheless led that school to its highest perfection Julius entrusted him with the construction of the Vatican Loggie, and of the Museum, to which he contributed the chief treasures of his palace at the Santi Apostoli. These were the Belvedere Apollo, and the Laocoon, discovered in 1506, in a vineyard among the ruins of the Baths of Titus. Further excavation revealed the Torso of the Belvedere and the sleeping Ariadne. Earth itself opened to give new life to antiquity. It was also Julius II. who commissioned Sansovino to execute Rome's most celebrated funeral monuments: those in memory of Cardinal Girolamo Basso and Cardinal Ascanio Sforza. What other Mæcenas did so much for art, or can be even distantly compared with this Pope?

Should the student, while admiring the superhuman beauty of Leonardo's, Raffaello's, and Michel Angelo's works, again repeat the question we have already mooted: how it came about that this divine power of uplifting and purifying the spirit of mankind should have been granted to men born amidst such depths of moral decay and corruption, there would be much to say in reply. First of all we might remark, that as yet the links between the intellectual and moral development of nations are too im-

events. Hence the mistaken belief of many that the undeniable contrast between the nation's intellectual and moral state was permanent instead of transitory, inherent, as it were, to our character and inseparable from it.

But certainly this contrast is continuously before our eyes in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and we must again note its presence in the history of our literature now that this had ceased to be classic and learned, and become national and modern. This literary transformation was mainly brought about by the Ferrarese poet Ariosto, who composed his "Orlando Furioso" at this period, and contributed more than all others, as Capponi says, "to render the Tuscan tongue the language of the nation."[1] We have already seen how the romances of chivalry of the cycle of Charlemagne, after winning much popularity in Tuscany during the fifteenth century, acquired literary shape in the "Morgante" of Pulci. Together with these, and even more than these, the romances of the Arthurian cycle and the heroes of the Round Table had become popular among the castles in the valley of the Po, where, once upon a time, it had been the custom to write and sing in Provençal, and where, later, poems were written in a hybrid form of Italianized French or Frenchified Italian. This dialect, however, soon disappeared before the rapid spread of Italian and Latin elements, and at a later date the learned men made Ferrara the chief centre of classic culture in Northern Italy. The Este family and the Universities helped to bring this about, but above all the incessant activity of Guarino Veronese, whose numerous pupils speedily diffused the study of Latin and Greek. Owing to this double current, this engrafting of the classic and the romantic, even as the "Morgante" had appeared in Florence, so now Boiardo's "Orlando Inamorato" came forth at Ferrara. Versed in Greek and Latin lore, an ardent admirer of knightly romance, singularly, and almost extravagantly, hopeful of the resuscitation of chivalry, Boiardo showed true poetic ideality and original power in the construction of his poem, by mingling the Arthurian cycle with that of Charlemagne. Such were the forerunners of Ariosto in Ferrara, the which city was now the rival of Florence and the centre of chivalric poetry and refinement.

Nevertheless, the streets of Ferrara, and its ducal castle in particular, were not solely quiet havens of peaceful study—they were likewise the scene of most atrocious crimes. Alfonso I, who became lord of the city in 1505, was a skilful captain; her foundries produced the best artillery in Europe, and, notwithstanding a gloomy and ferocious disposition, he played the patron

[1] Capponi, "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," bk. v. chap. viii.

less to do with public life where demoralization had reached its highest pitch.[1]

As a proof that true greatness of soul was still to be found in those days we have only to cite the career of Christopher Columbus. In 1492 this navigator first left Europe and crossed unexplored seas, to attempt the discovery of the New World, and in 1504, at the age of sixty-four years, he returned from his fourth voyage, beset by a series of horrible storms, and closed his eyes on the 20th of May, 1506. The grandest element of his life and of his truly heroic character is neither the intrepidity with which he braved known and unknown perils, nor the steadfastness with which he confronted mockery, persecution, calumny, and ingratitude of the blackest dye The determining feature of his character, and hence the chief source of his moral greatness, was his unshaken faith in the inductions of science—the spirit enabling him, amid the turmoil of Atlantic waves, and the rebellion of mutinous comrades, to persist in recording every new phenomenon that he beheld. This it was that gave him strength to pass safely over trackless waters, and this, too, was the genuine spirit of the Italian Renaissance, without which no such man could have come into the world. That Italy should have given him birth proves that, notwithstanding her depth of corruption, our country would have been able to find in her own intellectual grandeur a natural basis for the construction of a new moral world had not foreign invasions assaulted her at the very moment of transformation, and at once changed and shattered the course of

[1] On the history of Italian art at this period, besides the best known Italian works and those already quoted by us, see also Grimm, "Michelangelo's Leben" (we have no knowledge of the last edition); Clement, "Michelangelo, Leonardo, und Raffael deutsch bearbeitet,' von C Clauss (Leipzig, Sumann, 1870); Crowe and Cavalcaselle, "History of Painting in Italy," a work very generally known Very valuable as a short history of Italian art is the volume on the "Fine Arts," forming a part of "The Renaissance in Italy," by John Addington Symonds (London, Smith, Elder & Co., 1875–1877). The biography of Michel Angelo, written by A. Gotti, and already quoted by us, is the first in which use is made of the great sculptor's "Lettere," edited by G. Milanesi (Florence, Le Monnier, 1875) "The Life of Michel Angelo," by Mr C. Heath Wilson (London, Murray, 1877), is founded on the lines of Gotti's work, but with the addition of many independent judgments, and much original research, especially on the frescoes of the Sistine Chapel. Copious notices on the fine arts are to be found in the Roman histories of Gregorovius and von Reumont, the latter also treats the subject in his work on Lorenzo dei Medici. The following books also merit examination: H. Janitschek, "Die Gesellschaft der Renaissance in Italien" (Stuttgart, Spemann, 1879); Hermann Hettner, "Italienische Studien zur Geschichte der Renaissance" (Brunswick, Vieweg, 1879). In the *Nuova Antologia* (issue of the 1st of June, 1880) there is a valuable study on the "Scolari di Raffaello" from the pen of Marco Minghetti.

view. A priest named Gianni, likewise concerned in th
escaped execution in consideration of his robe; but he was
in an iron cage hung from a turret, so that all men mig
him. A week later he was strangled, to induce the beli
he had committed suicide. His corpse was mutilated, d
through the town, suspended by one foot from a stake, and
left to fall to pieces from decay.

Yet this Court of Ferrara was the home and centre of l
men, who praised in elegant verse the magnanimity of the
the chastity of the Cardinal, the gentle piety and pu
Duchess Lucrezia! At the head of this Court circle was I
not yet a cardinal, but young, handsome, an accomplished g
a great admirer of Lucrezia's charms, a learned Greek sch
polished composer of Latin prose and verse and at the sam
one of those who mainly contributed to bring into credit t
of the written vernacular. But the favourite of all Ferra
most gracious and pleasant cavalier, sought by every on
cherished by all, was the poet Ercole Strozzi. His Latin
met with great favour, and some, dedicated to Madonna Lu
were in celebration of Cæsar Borgia's sanguinary deeds.
couraged by Bembo, and inspired by his passion for B
Torello, he also penned a few Italian sonnets. At daybre
the 6th of June, 1508, this brilliant youth was found dead
street close to the church of San Francesco, his throat cut, hi
pierced with twenty-two wounds. Several locks of his long
hair had been torn from his head and lay scattered on the
beside his corpse. All Ferrara wept for him, but no one's
was so eloquently expressed as that of the bride, whom h
publicly espoused just thirteen days before: "Why can I
down to the grave with thee?"

> "Vorrei col foco mio quel freddo ghiaccio
> Intepidire, e rimpastar col pianto
> La polve e ravvivarla a nuova vita;
> E vorrei poscia, baldanzosa e ardita,
> Mostrarlo a lui che ruppe il caro laccio,
> E dirgli: amor, mostro crudel, può tanto."[1]

Amid the perennial chatter of Petrarchian rhymesters, an
[illegible] and sickly conceits of the schoolmen, the despairing
cry of this woman, who, although without naming him, see

[1] [illegible] fire [illegible] warm this rigid ice; my tears restore this d
[illegible] with daring joy I would approach the m
[illegible] and exclaim, 'Ferocious monster! see what l
[illegible] Ferrara, [illegible], 1713, p.

to poets and painters. His wife was Lucrezia Borgia, who, from fear, prudence, or the altered condition of things, seemed now to have become a different woman. She was frequent in her devotions, gave largely to the poor, promoted charitable institutions, and passed her days among men of letters, who lauded her beauty and chastity, her piety and her theological attainments But, as if by some horrible fatality inherent to her name and blood, strange and terrible tragedies went on around her, even in Ferrara.

One of her waiting maidens named Angiola Borgia,[1] was courted by two of the Duke's brothers, the bastard Don Giulio and Cardinal Ippolito. The latter was a bishop at seven years of age, a cardinal at fourteen, loved field sports, fighting, women, and high living better than the Church, and died at the age of forty-one, from a surfeit, it was said, of roasted crayfish and excess of *vernaccia*, a strong white wine that he kept stored in a coal cellar. So impetuous was his temper that he once caused a flogging to be given to an envoy bearing him an admonition from Pope Julius II. To this man Angiola Borgia incautiously admitted that she could not resist the fascination of his brother's—and rival's—eyes. Thereupon the Cardinal repaired to Belriguardo, lay in wait for Don Giulio, and, on the latter's return from a hunting party, had him dragged from his saddle by four *bravi* and his eyes torn out in the presence of the woman he loved. The Duke was furious, but quickly pardoned the offender; for he was never inexorable, save to kinsmen who sought to usurp his power, and nothing of that sort was to be feared from a cardinal. But the bastard, Don Giulio, thirsted for revenge. He had regained the sight of one eye, which had not been entirely wrenched from the socket. Accordingly he joined with another brother, Ferrante, who aspired to the lordship of the city, and planned the assassination of both Cardinal and Duke (1506). The plot being betrayed, Don Giulio fled to Mantua, and Don Ferrante foolishly threw himself on the Duke's mercy, who this time knew no relenting. With a blow from the staff he held in his hand, the Duke knocked out the suppliant's eye, in order, as he said, to make him match his brother and accomplice. He then cast him into a dungeon. There Ferrante died, and there Don Giulio, afterwards languished, until restored to liberty by Alfonso II in the year 1559. Three confidential friends of the conspirators were quartered, fragments of their corpses suspended above the castle gates, their heads spitted on lances and exposed to public

[1] Our purpose requires us to give details of these events, although briefly noticed earlier in this volume.

a fit of abstraction he walked all the way from Ferrara to Carpi in his slippers Entirely immersed in his art, even the greatest events of the time failed to arouse him. When, in 1496, Charles VIII. was preparing a new descent into Italy, Ariosto was engaged upon a Latin ode in imitation of Horace. "Me nulla tangat cura." "What signifies to me the coming of Charles and his hosts? I shall rest in the shade, hearkening to the gentle murmur of the waters, watching the reapers at work. And thou, oh my Phillis, wilt stretch thy white hand among the enamelled flowers, and weave me garlands to the music of thy voice."[1] The death of the poet Michele Marullo seemed to him a worse misfortune than the foreign invasion. What mattered it, to be subject to a French instead of a Latin king, when the oppression remained the same? "Barbarico ne esse est pejus sub nomine quam sub moribus?"[2]

From 1495 to 1503 he devoted himself with tremendous ardour to the study of the classics, and wrote Latin verses full of movement and fervour; thus refining his taste and strengthening and fortifying his style, which was still tentative and insipid in Italian. He knew little or no Greek. Having entered the service of the Cardinal d'Este, he wrote verses in praise of his patron's goodness and purity! He narrated the atrocious incident of the blinding of Don Giulio, exculpating his murderous master, and denying his relationship to the victim, whom he accuses of malice, envy, and adultery.[3] But he could affirm the kinship later, when it became a question of lauding Alfonso's magnanimity in sparing the lives of brethren guilty of conspiring against their own blood, and only condemning them to imprisonment.[4] He even celebrated the purity and holiness of Lucrezia Borgia. But all this was the conventional language of the Court, and sometimes a simple imitation of Horace. When, however, Ariosto vented his real feelings, as in the satire on his brother Galasso, he seems another man, and expresses sentiments almost worthy of Tacitus. Burning with indignation, he describes the licentious and ambitious lives of prelates, who are ever trying to mount higher, and covetous of temporal power alone. "What will ensue if one of these men should fill St Peter's chair? He will instantly remove his sons and nephews from the sphere of private life. But even to give them kingdoms, he will never be moved to make war upon the Infidel. That would in some sort be worthy of his office."

[1] This ode is given by Carducci in *op cit.*, pp. 81–82.
[2] *Vide* same work, p. 130
[3] L. Ariosto, "Opere Minori." Florence, Le Monnier, 1857. Two volumes. Vol i. pp 267–76
[4] "Orlando Furioso," canto iii. st. 62, and canto xlvi. st 95.

Carducci expresses it, to point her finger at the crowned assassin of her spouse, strikes on our ears like a voice of nature, a genuine inspiration of poetry that was once more Italian. Rumour declared that Lucrezia Borgia had been jealous of Barbara ; but everything points to the conclusion that the jealousy was the Duke's, and that he revenged himself on the unfortunate young poet for repulses received from the latter's mistress and wife [1]

Such was the society frequented by Ariosto, when secretary to the haughty and dissolute Cardinal d'Este, and even his own home afforded no better example. He could not fail to know that his father Niccolò had been sent to Mantua by Duke Ercole I., for the purpose of poisoning Niccolò d'Este, the would-be usurper of the government, and that the plot was discovered barely in time to prevent the elder Ariosto from administering the draught. The assassin found safety in flight, but his accomplices were hanged. And while holding the office of Captain of the fortress at Reggio d'Emilia, where Lodovico Ariosto was born in 1474, Niccolò had satisfied his greed for wealth by pilfering the stores of his unlucky soldiers. Summoned to Ferrara in 1480, the populace almost openly revolted against him, and poems appeared, fiercely attacking and branding him as a thief, traitor, and assassin. One of these poems represents his wife lamenting that she cannot cross her threshold for fear of hearing herself styled the wife of a thief, while her husband cynically replies :—

> "Io rubo e ruberò chè in fra le genti
> Chi è senza roba matto dir si suole." [2]

At Lugo in 1496 he was deprived of his office of Commissary for having unjustly put a nobleman to the torture. Fortunately his son was too much absorbed in his own thoughts to notice what went on around him. When his father harshly reproved him for neglecting his legal studies, he listened very attentively, but only in order to turn the lecture to account in the "Cassaria," a comedy he was then writing. The poet Strozzi gives a description of Ariosto out hunting, and of how he uncoupled the hounds while pondering his elegies [3] One day in

[1] Carducci, "Delle poesie Latine edite ed inedite di L. Ariosto." Scrotti, "Vita di L. Ariosto." Ferrara, Camerale Printing Office, 1773; Carducci, *op. cit.*, p 202.

[2] "I thieve and will thieve, for in this world, he who has nothing is called mad" *Vide* "Sonetti giveosi" di Antonio da Pistoia, and "Sonetti satirici senza nome d'Anton," Bologna, Romagnoli, 1865. No. lviii. of the collection of "Curiosità Litterarie."

[3] Carducci gives Strozzi's verses at page 92 of the work to which we have already referred.

although certain of his verses had been best left unwritten. He was unfailingly affectionate to his kindred, but inconstant in his loves, until Alessandra Benucci bound him to her for life. He appears to have married her secretly, in order not to forfeit his right to certain family benefices. He was never so happy as when dividing his life between his study and his garden. In the latter, as his son Virgilio tells us, "he worked on the same plan as in the composition of his poems, for he never allowed anything he planted to remain more than three months in the same spot; if he sowed peach-stones, or any other seed, he so often stirred them to see whether they had sprouted that he ended by destroying the shoots. . . . I remember that once, after planting some capers, he went daily to look how they were getting on, and was vastly pleased by their vigorous growth. In the end he discovered them to be sumachs, and that no capers had come up."[1] For a man of this temper Court life was advantageous, since it forced him from his solitude into contact with the world. He was entrusted with various diplomatic missions to Rome and elsewhere; acted as governor in Garfagnana, where he had much to do and experienced many annoyances; he accompanied his patron, the Cardinal, not only on hunting excursions and journeys, but even on military campaigns. It is also said that during the fight of Polesella in 1510, he succeeded in capturing a Venetian vessel on the Po, and thus contributed to the Duke's victory.[2] Certainly these events were of use to the poet, who was soon to write such admirable descriptions of nature and mankind.

Down to 1503 he continued to pen Latin verse, but then, at last, began the poem of the "Orlando Furioso," and speedily showed the marvellous results of his long study. He had now acquired, without loss of spontaneity, singular vigour, elegance, and dignified sobriety, and all these qualities had been absent from his former Italian writings. The genius of Ariosto was developed and hewn into shape by dint of perseverance and unflagging application. He corrected and recorrected his verses over and over again, with a carefulness specially remarkable in a writer whose chief merits were simple spontaneity and elegance. He had gained these gifts by infusing the terse Latin element into the Italian poetry of his period, and was thus able to regenerate and make it immortal. And the coupling of the two elements

[1] *Vide* the "Memorie," written by Ariosto's son, and included by Barotti in his "Vita di L. Ariosto." Ferrara, Camerale Press, 1773; Carducci, *op. cit.*, p. 202.

[2] Baruffaldi, "Vita di Lodovico Ariosto," p. 137; Antonio Cappelli, "Lettere di L. Ariosto con prefazione e documenti." Bologna, 1866, 2nd edition, pp. xlv–vi.

"Ma spezzar la Colonna e spegner l'Orso,[1]
Per torgli Palestina[2] e Tagliacozzo
E dargli a suoi, sarà il primo discorso.
E qual strozzato, e qual col capo mozzo
Nella Marca lasciando ed in Romagna,[3]
Trionferà del cristian sangue sozzo
Darà l'Italia in preda a Francia e Spagna,
Che sozzopra voltandola, una parte
Al suo bastardo sangue ne rimagna."[4]

But even events such as these failed to disturb Ariosto's serenity. His whole life was devoted to the Muses; all things served as themes for poetry; he polished and repolished his verses until he had brought them up to the desired pitch of perfection. Then his cares were at an end. Corruption stirred him to no lofty wrath, but, if little moved by it, he escaped its infection. When Cardinal d'Este insisted that he should go with him to Hungary, he replied that he did not wish to turn horseman instead of poet, and, quitting the Court, regained his freedom and applied himself to his studies with fresh ardour. This step was no sacrifice, for so modest were his tastes, so simple his mode of life, that, as he said, he deserved to have been born in the days when men fed on acorns. "Rather than seek wealth I desire quiet, to carry on those studies which cultivate the mind and render me too heedless of poverty ever to renounce liberty in order to avoid it. I feel no envy on seeing my lord and master beckon to another instead of to me. I go alone and on foot whither my affairs call me, and when I ride my own hands buckle the saddle-bags on my horse's back."[5] Thus it came about that while in his writings he frequently went with the times, he was never contaminated by them. Accordingly, no unworthy act can be imputed to him,

[1] The Colonna and Orsini families.

[2] He means Palestrina, an estate of the Colonna.

[3] An allusion to Cæsar Borgia's wars in Romagna, and more especially to the slaughter at Sinigaglia

[4] Ariosto, "Opere Minori," vol. i. satira i. pp. 159–60. The lines may be roughly rendered:—

"But to break the Colonna and crush the Bear,
To seize Palestrina and Tagliacozzo
And give them to his own, will be the first affair.
And this one hung and that beheaded,
Down the Marches and in Romagna
He will triumph with Christian blood well sated.
Italy will he give in prey to France and Spain,
And they, overrunning all, some share
To the race of his bastards may remain."

[5] "Opere Minori," vol. i. satira ii. pp. 166 and fol.

Chargers, knights and ladies, storms, forests, enchanted lands, incidents and personages, both possible and impossible, pass before our fascinated gaze with the force of reality and nature. How is it that in reading this poem we seem transported to the Loggie of the Vatican? Why do Galatea, Psyche, the figures of the school of Athens and the Parnassus, seem to start from the walls and hover around us, while the poet's varied fancies become living forms moving, breathing, and smiling upon us like old acquaintances? It is because this poetry is a mirror reflecting the whole life of the age, both outer and inner, both moral and æsthetic, with all its splendours and all its contradictions. And this mirror finally makes it all clear and intelligible to us, tracing, nay, almost moulding its physiognomy, and adorning it with its myriad changing tints. In the "Orlando Furioso," knightly romance puts forth its fullest strength, and thus spends its vigour; from this moment it begins to decay, and can do little else than subsist on the remains of its old vitality.[1]

[1] Besides the histories of Italian literature and the life of Ariosto by G. Baruffaldi (Ferrara, 1805), see the "Notizie per la vita di L. Ariosto, tratte da documenti inediti," and edited by G. Campori (Modena, Vincenzi, 1871, 2nd edition); Panizzi, "The Life of Ariosto," prefacing his edition of "Orlando Furioso," published in London, 1834. Leaving aside many other works which might be quoted, we will only mention two of the more recent that have been of much use to us, and to which we have frequently referred: *i.e.*, Carducci's work on the "Poesie latine edite ed inedite di Lodovico Ariosto;" and that published by Cappelli, "Lettere di Lodovico Ariosto, tratte dall' Archivio di Stato a Modena, con prefazione, documenti, note, ec." Another very valuable work is Professor Pio Rajna's "Le fonti dell' Orlando Furioso" (Florence, Sansoni, 1876) The contents of the poem and its sources are treated in this volume with all the author's well-known learning. In his introduction he gives a brief history of the poems of chivalry, and maintains that Ariosto's inaugurated the imitative period, and marked the close of "the fortunate period in which classic lore served to promote originality." Professor Rajna places Boiardo in the latter period. We, on the contrary, hold that Ariosto's poem proves that at that time classic lore did promote poetic originality, for it was in this quality that he pre-eminently excelled. There are no signs of decadence in Ariosto, but rather the most splendid and mature flowering of art, which only began to wither after his time Touching the subject and plot of the poem, Boiardo certainly showed greater originality since he was the inventor of both, while Ariosto only continued and worked them out. However, in art, form is a substantial part; therefore I cannot join with Professor Rajna in asserting that Boiardo shows us how classic lore brought forth true poetic originality. Still more impossible does the assertion become when we reflect that the subject of the poem of chivalry has little or nothing in common with the classics. Their influence was advantageous to style, for Boiardo's style was far from correct. Professor Rajna compares Ariosto to Raphael, the painter of very human virgins, and contrasts him with Frà Angelico, the painter of truly celestial beings Would he then maintain that the classics promoted less originality in Raphael than in Frà Angelico? All that can be said is that the religious sentiment is more lively in the Friar's saints and virgins. As, in our opinion,

was accomplished in Ariosto's verse with the same perfection and harmony visible in Raffaello's frescoes of the Galatea, the school of Athens and the Parnassus.

The epic material of the "Orlando Furioso" is no more than a continuation and development of Boiardo's "Orlando Inamorato." The manner, however, in which the poem is built up, its various sources, its characters, and the question of its ironical or non-ironical meaning—a much-disputed point—are all extremely important to literary history and criticism, but need not be discussed at this moment. Here we have only to remark that the originality of Ariosto principally consists in the novel form of poetry created by him on the plan we have mentioned Let us turn the pages at random, for greater delight is gained in this fragmentary fashion than by steady perusal. Let us glance at the adventures of Cloridano and Medoro in the enemy's camp; let us admire their friendship, their fidelity, and the courage with which Medoro defends the body of his king —

> "Come orsa che Valpestro cacciatore
> Nella pietrosa tana assalita abbia,
> Sta sopra i figli con incerto core,
> E freme in suono di pietà e di rabbia, &c." [1]

Medoro was already a prisoner, and Zerbino, enraged by the blows inflicted on his men by the unseen Cloridano,

> "Stese la mano in quella chioma d'oro
> E strascinollo a sè con violenza;
> Ma come gli occhi a quel bel volto mise,
> Gli ne venne pietade e non l'uccise." [2]

But before our emotions are too much excited, the poet transports us elsewhere on the winged steed of his fancy, and we find the fainting Medoro supported in the arms of the beautiful Angelica. We pass from adventure to adventure, from one description to another, and even objects seen a thousand times before appear full of life and freshness, as though the world were just issuing from chaos before our eyes. The rose so often sung and described by poets seems to shoot from the soil for the first time, radiantly blossoming, fresh and virgin, endued with new beauty in a garb of immortal verse—

> "L'aura soave e l'alba rugiadosa,
> L'aria, la terra al suo favor s'inchina."

[1] "Orlando Furioso," xix. 7. [2] Ibid., xix. 10.

principal offices and dignities of the Republic. It was he who, while filling the post of Gonfalonier, favoured Lorenzo dei Medici's schemes by passing the law upon wills that he knew to be equally unjust and dangerous, and that afterwards led to the terrible conspiracy of the Pazzi in 1478. It was he, too, who kept the people quiet when Lorenzo had to go to Naples to avert the war brought on by the conspiracy. This Guicciardini's son, Piero, father to the historian, had a certain amount of literary culture, was acquainted with philosophy, and the Greek and Latin tongues, and acquitted himself honourably of various embassies and other political offices. He was an admirer of Savonarola, attending his sermons and even making a compendium of them; he had little friendship for Soderini, and, like all the Guicciardini, was an adherent of the Medici. But he never let himself be carried away by party spirit, being an honest, temperate man, benevolent to the poor and peaceful both in counsel and action. In fact, his son, in celebrating his many merits, has only one fault to find with him—that of being too quiet and reserved.

This son, the historian, was born in 1482; he coupled the prudence of his father with the energy of his grandparent, while surpassing both in intellect and culture. Of temperate habits and dignified manners, selfish and very ambitious of power, he was also covetous of wealth, although not to the extent of seeking it by dishonest means. Indeed he and the Guicciardini in general enjoyed the reputation of having always kept their hands clean. He early applied himself to serious study. He was a good Latin scholar and versed in what were then the first rudiments of mathematics; he also studied Greek, but, as he tells us himself, entirely forgot it. Thus the three great writers of that learned age, namely, Ariosto, Machiavelli, and Guicciardini, either knew no Greek at all, or so little as to quickly forget it. In 1498, the year of Savonarola's execution, Guicciardini was a lad of sixteen. He began the study of Roman and civil law, first in the Florence studio, then from 1500 to 1505 at Ferrara and Padua, with the addition of canonical law. During this period, Florence being in a very disturbed state, Guicciardini's father thought it well to commit 2000 crowns—a large sum for those days—to his son's safe keeping in Ferrara; and the latter, notwithstanding his youth, rendered scrupulous account of the whole. This is not only a proof of his prudence, but likewise of the confidence reposed in him by his father. About the same time, his uncle, the Bishop of Cortona, fell seriously ill and died shortly after in 1503. Instantly his nephew determined to throw learning aside and enter the priesthood, requesting his uncle, who seemed disposed to consent, to

It is a singular fact that in the first twenty years of the sixteenth century nearly all the master works of Italian genius came to light, and it was within this period that the minds of their authors attained to maturity All Machiavelli's principal works were likewise written during these years, and many of those of Guicciardini, although more pressing occupations compelled the latter to defer to later times the composition of his great History of Italy. But he now wrote several of his numerous Ambassadorial Reports, his Florentine History, and other works which would have alone sufficed to give him enduring fame. And these works plainly illustrate his character—certainly one of the most typical of the age, and one that brings it most clearly before us. As we shall frequently meet with Guicciardini again, and be introduced into his intimacy, it will not be amiss—now that he has appeared upon the scene—to give some particulars of his life, derived from his "Autobiographical Reminiscences." Unfortunately these give exact and minute details of his early years only, and are then interrupted. He was descended from a very old race of Florentine nobles. The majority of his ancestors were active and keen-witted men, but addicted to the pleasures of life, self-interested, and greedy of power. He tells us that Messer Luigi, his great-uncle, was several times Gonfalonier of the Republic, had four wives, and was so given to women, that even in his old age he would run after serving-maids and stop them in the streets. He had no legitimate male issue, but had one natural son by a slave, and left his whole fortune to him. This son afterwards became Bishop of Cortona. Like his father he was of licentious habits, even when advanced in years, "and in gluttony followed the example of other Churchmen who stay in Florence taking their ease, and whose chief concern is thought of their dinner." [1]

Guicciardini's grandfather, Messer Jacopo, also given to gluttony and dissipation, was a keen and daring if unlettered man, a declared partisan of the Medici, and held in turn all the

both Ariosto and Raphael show greater and truer originality, we cannot subscribe to the following judgment of the illustrious author: "Besides the bent of his genius, Boiardo had the good fortune to come into the world at the right moment. Neither before nor after could even he have succeeded in uniting the freshness and dashing spontaneity of the popular poet with the chasteness, the clear and exact knowledge of scope and means, proper to the artistic poet. In the later-born Ariosto the artist is supreme; *but classic learning is no longer transformed into living strength; the process of re-creation is replaced by imitation*" (Rajna, *op. cit.*, pp 33, 34). It seems to us, on the contrary, that in Ariosto classic imitation promotes instead of destroying spontaneous creation; it is no reproduction, but a true and actual renascence.

[1] "Ricardo Autobiografici," in the "Opere Inedite," vol. x. p. 32. and fol.

of these two productions has no great literary value, since, being chiefly composed of notes and detached fragments, it was soon interrupted. Yet the admirable faculty of observation, and exactitude of psychological inquiry, which were the dominant merits of the writer's maturity, are already evident in these "Ricordi." They have likewise the same simple, direct, and spontaneous style characteristic of all his "Opere Inedite," whereas that of the "Storia d'Italia," is exceedingly artificial. Here, too, the writer's feeling for and instinctive need of truth and reality are sometimes pushed to the verge of cynicism—as, for example, when he quietly notes facts, little to the credit of himself and his ancestors, with the same calm and indifference as though he were writing of purely historical personages.

His Florentine History, on the contrary, is a work of sound literary merit. Starting from Cosimo dei Medici, whom he quickly passes over to begin upon Lorenzo, it finishes with the battle of Ghiara d'Adda, where the Venetians were defeated by the French on the 14th of May, 1509. Thus, it may be said to be a history of events either contemporaneous with, or little removed from, the author's day. Its pages mark the transition from the old chronicle to modern history, which here takes shape for the first time. It is true that the author still follows the plan of noting the beginning of each year, as though it were the necessary beginning either of a new historic period or of new events; but this is done in so fugitive a manner that the reader hardly perceives it The contents, however, are divided into chapters, according to the nature of the subjects and events, the which are narrated and developed with admirable regularity. This work shows a lucidity, an elegance, and above all a penetrating judgment and experience of mankind that are positively astounding in a writer of only twenty-seven years, and who had as yet taken no part in public affairs. His acumen in the definition of character, in the description of the vicissitudes of party strife, and the personal motives and passions provoking or leading up to events, his impartiality towards the Medici, the enthusiasm with which he renders justice to Savonarola; in a word, the objective truth and historic precision of his narrative are beyond all praise. When the events he recorded had not passed before his eyes, or been derived from credible witnesses, it is ascertained that he was careful to refer to the original documents. It was with their aid that he expounded the laws, reforms, and diplomatic missions of the Republic, and

one knows, dated the beginning of the year from the 25th of March (*ab Incarnatione*). In his "History of Italy," on the contrary, he follows the Roman style, dating the new year from the 25th of December (*a Nativitate*).

immediately resign in his favour the benefices he held. This step, Guicçiardini tells us, was not caused by any vocation for the religious life, nor from love of the indolence so general among the wearers of ecclesiastical robes; but solely in order to make his way in the world, and end by becoming a cardinal.[1] These facts are sufficient to show from the beginning the good and bad qualities of the youth, and to foreshadow the character of the man. Fortunately for him it happened that Piero Guicciardini, although the father of five sons, renounced all idea of retaining ecclesiastical benefices in the family; he had no wish that any child of his should be a priest, since, as he expressed it, the Church "was too thoroughly gone to the bad." In fact these were the days of Alessandro Borgia.

Accordingly, on the conclusion of his university career, Francesco Guicciardini came to Florence, as appointed teacher of law, took his doctor's degree, and speedily became one of the first Professors of the Studio. But in 1506 the Studio was closed, and he then practised with success the profession of advocate. He was very eager to make rapid way in the world; to further that purpose he even planned a suitable marriage, and, in 1508, took to wife Maria Salviati. His father opposed the match, not so much because he preferred and hoped that his son should choose a richer bride, as because he was unfavourable to an alliance with the Salviati, who were too fond of luxury, too hostile to the Gonfalonier Soderini, and too much moved by party spirit. "However," writes the younger Guicciardini, "I deemed that five hundred crowns more or less made but little difference, and I wished to ally myself with the Salviati, exactly because, in addition to their wealth, they surpassed other families in influence and power, and I had a great liking for these things."[2] His plans were successful, for he was quickly entrusted with many offices, missions, and affairs all of which brought him no less profit than honour.

The same year saw the beginning of his first works, for on the 13th of April, 1508, he began to write his "Ricordi Autobiografici e di Famiglia,"[3] and almost simultaneously his "Storia Fiorentina," which was more than half finished by February, 1509.[4] The first

[1] "Ricordi Autobiografici," p. 68.

[2] *Op. cit.*, p. 71.

[3] "I began to write on the 13th day of April, 1508." These words occur at the beginning.

[4] At p. 250 of this work, in mentioning the institution of the Tribunal of the Ruota in 1501, he says: "It still exists at this date, 23rd of February, 1508," which according to the new style is equivalent to 1509 We may remark that throughout this history Guicciardini follows the Florentine style, that, as every



CHAPTER X.

Machiavelli superintends the drilling of the Militia—His journey to Sienna—General condition of Europe—Maximilian makes preparations for coming into Italy, to assume the imperial crown—Machiavelli's mission to the Emperor—His writings on France and Germany.

(1506–1510.)



URING the years 1506 and 1507, Machiavelli was employed on a series of petty details. His whole time was now given to the organization of the new militia, a task devolving entirely upon him and undertaken with much ardour and cheerfulness. He was daily employed in writing to the Podestà, or Mayors of different towns, instructing them to draw up muster rolls of all able-bodied men, form battalions, and provide funds for the expense of levying and drilling the men on the lists. He forwarded weapons and instructions; was apprised of all serious riots, and took measures to quell them, either by adjudging suitable punishments, or, in extreme cases, despatching Don Michele and his company to use violent means. Frequently, however, the great brutality of Don Michele, instead of extinguishing disorder, only inflamed it, and other remedies had to be sought. Machiavelli attended to all this business in the name of the Nine (the Balìa of War), to whom he was secretary; but in point of fact was held responsible for everything. Consequently the captains

sometimes in almost identical words. So far he had not entered, as in the History of Italy, on a wider and more complex field of events; and, as frequently occurs in his other works, he sometimes fails to perceive the impersonal concatenation of events, through trying to refer all things to selfish passions and individual efforts, to diplomacy and political intrigue. Nevertheless he has furnished us not only with the first instance of modern civil history, but likewise with one of the first and most brilliant models of the new Italian prose: a lofty, simple, lucid, and elegant prose, spontaneous without triviality, dignified and correct without ever falling into the snare of Latin circumlocution. And we may at once remark that Guicciardini never allowed himself to be carried away by his own imagination, as was sometimes the case with Machiavelli. He is no lover of poetry, can neither write comedies nor "Decennali," seeks no theories, and has no ideals to transport him beyond the bounds of reality. For the same reason his exactitude in the description and narration of events is, as we shall frequently have occasion to observe, very superior to that of Machiavelli, to whom in other respects he was inferior. It would be hard to find in the literature of any other nation, especially of that period, any historical picture at once so lucid, elegant, and precise, or with so sure and deep a knowledge of men and things, at all equal to this Florentine History. Also, notwithstanding certain divergences, it is so nearly akin to Machiavelli's writings, both in matter and manner, as to strengthen our conviction that these authors' works, albeit the individual creations of two men of genius, are none the less the necessary product of their age, and mark an epoch in the history of national thought.



Legate the Emperor's real views as to the serious political complications then brewing [1]

We accordingly find the Florentine secretary engaged in the very humble office of inditing reports from Sienna concerning the hundred and ten horses and the thirty or forty mules brought by the Legate; and also recording how many calves, flayed lambs, pairs of fowls, geese, young pigeons, flasks of wine, and melons had been presented to him by the Siennese.[2] He adds how it was rumoured that Pandolfo Petrucci was in reality vexed at the coming of the Emperor, deeming it useful only to the Pisans, although feigning to be pleased. Also, that the Legate was commissioned to dissuade the Emperor from continuing his journey, and had therefore, together with another German Cardinal, been empowered to crown him elsewhere than in Italy. But even these few and scanty particulars were mere floating reports.

Nevertheless, the Emperor's progress kept all minds in suspense. At Florence it was viewed under many aspects, and one of its results was that before long Machiavelli had to leave Italy on a foreign mission Not only was it known that wherever the Emperor passed he exacted large sums of money; but also so serious and manifold were the elements of European complication, that the smallest incident might lead to the gravest and most unforeseen consequences. The death of Queen Isabella and the revolt of Castile in favour of the Archduke Philip and his wife Joanna, the daughter and legitimate heiress to the Queen, had compelled Ferdinand of Aragon to pursue a more cautious and less aggressive policy. He had therefore made truce with France, had signed the treaty of Blois with that country in October, 1505, and had come to Italy to make a closer inspection of the state of affairs. The death of the Archduke, which occurred at this time, the insanity of Joanna, and the regency of Castile consequently entrusted to Ferdinand, tranquilized that monarch to some extent. These events, however, gave him much to do at home, where there was no lack of causes of disorder, and no lack of malcontents. The latter might easily find a leader in the great Captain Gonsalvo, now living in retirement on his own lands, on account of the jealousy and mistrust the monarch had conceived of him,

[1] In the "Opere," vol. vii p 146, there is an epistle of the Ten, dated 18th of May, 1507, despatching him to Piombino, to make friendly overtures to the Lord of that State, whom, as a near neighbour of the Pisans, it was necessary to conciliate. But on reaching Volterra, another letter, dated 20th of May, summoned him instantly back (*vide* "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv., No. 141), on account, it was said, of there being no longer any necessity for the mission.

[2] "Opere," vol vii pp. 147–155. The letters are dated on the 10th, 12th, and 14th of August, 1507.

of the militia showered upon him an immense number of letters, many of which are still in existence.[1] Nor was this all. He had to make frequent journeys through the territories of the Republic, and personally contend with a thousand fresh difficulties; he had to make levies of foot soldiers,[2] select the captains of the bands, and send lists of their names to Florence, where their nominations were at once confirmed, as *chosen and revised by Machiavelli*[3] The first trial made of these foot soldiers was to despatch several hundreds of them to the camp before Pisa; but no sooner had they gained a little reputation as good soldiers, than agents came from the Free Companies or from neighbouring States, tempting them by liberal offers to desert their flag. Hence fresh anxieties and fresh precautions, to prevent the difficult work from being undone as soon as it was started.[4]

But all this unceasing labour did not prevent him from being occasionally sent by the Ten or the Signoria on military business to the camp before Pisa, or on diplomatic missions of more or less importance. Soderini was always ready to employ him in this way, on account of the great confidence he reposed in him.

In the August of 1507 he was sent to Sienna, to report on the suite accompanying the Legate Bernardino Carvajal, Cardinal of Santa Croce, and on that prelate's reception there The Cardinal had been sent by the Pope to meet Maximilian[5] in the belief that the latter was truly coming to assume the imperial crown. Machiavelli's task was to use every endeavour to extract from the

[1] For an example of this correspondence, although of little importance, *vide* document i. of the Appendix (II.) of Italian edition, giving some of those comprised in the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv., Nos 57, 58, 79, 80, 113 There are many more among the same "Carte," and in private Florentine Archives, as we shall later have occasion to note. See to the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. pp. 339, 353.

[2] "Opere" (P. M), vol. i. pp 68, 69, and vol. v. p 249

[3] Between November, 1508, and February, 1509, he proposed and obtained the nomination of no less than 584 men Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti, d N. Machiavelli," p 339 and following of the notes

[4] Canestrini, "Scritti Inediti," pp 283-365 We have already noted that this work is very confused, and the choice of documents seems to have been made haphazard. Much superior, because arranged on a fixed plan, is the portion (pp 383-395) concerning the Florentine Militia, first published by Canestrini in vol xv of the "Archivio Storico" But the document LXI at p 258, asserted, without proof, to be written by Machiavelli, seems to us to afford no internal evidence of his authorship. There are many other letters by Machiavelli still remaining unedited, though of slight importance, regarding the Militia (Florence Archives, class xiii. 2, No 159, sheet 15-161). *Vide* Appendix (II.) of Italian edition, documents ii. and iii.

[5] Maximilian I. not having yet been crowned, only bore the title of King of the Romans. The following year he was elected Emperor, and in Germany King. Thus he was sometimes styled King and sometimes Emperor.

At the head of these very complicated and difficult p
conditions was the yet uncrowned emperor, still, th
entitled the King of the Romans. Maximilian I. was a
very curious and contradictory character. Of pleasant and
manners, not exactly handsome, but with a strong and w
portioned person, he was lavish of his money, was skilful
especially in the command of artillery, and was therefore
by his soldiery. His brain seethed with the strangest an
fantastic designs, which he could never bring to fulfilmen
no sooner did he begin to execute one, than he felt imp
start another.[1]

Still imbued with mediæval ideas, he wished to bend th
beneath the sway of the Empire; to reconquer Italy; t
Constantinople to fight the Turks and liberate the Holy Sep
sometimes, he even dreamed of becoming Pope, an idea tha
seem incredible, had he not expressed it in some of his
Nevertheless, this man, with his schemes for the subjection
East and West, had to endure daily disputes as to the nu
soldiers and amount of money due to the Empire from
and free cities; nor could he always succeed in obtaining ob
even from the subjects of his own special States. Mon
failed him for the payment of his troops, and he ma
appeals and in vain assembled diets to get supplies. Thus
reduced to pledge the crown jewels, and even to take servic
petty potentates, and receive pay almost as an ordinary free
All this, notwithstanding, he never abandoned his vast pro
which Germany sometimes affected to second him, and th
expectedly left him in the lurch. But even this did not
him from plunging into deeper schemes and perpetually p
fresh ones. Thus he stands before us as the last knight-e
a world on the point of extinction, and, in spite of his
qualities, often appears in a grotesquely comic light.

In his foreign policy Maximilian constantly found him
antagonism with France, who, by dint of maintaining
tine relations with many princes of the Empire, created co
difficulties for her adversary. The interests of the two
were perpetually clashing both in the Low Countries
Italy. For this reason, Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain ha

[1] Albèri, "Relazioni degli Ambasciatori veneti," series 1, vol. vi. pp
Quirini's "Relazione."

[2] Gregorovius, vol viii. pp. 68, 69; Alb. Jager, "Uber Kaiser Maxim
Verhaltniss zum Papstthum" (Sitzungsberichte der K. Akad. d Wissen
xii. Band, Wien, 1854); Brosch, "Papst Julius II.," Gotha, 1878,
Capitel, p. 144.

by reason of his enormous popularity with the army and with all Spain, whose forces had reaped great glory under his command All these things were to the advantage of France. Her good fortune and restless power were again in the ascendant, and a speedy opportunity for gaining fresh laurels was afforded her by the desperate revolt of Genoa. This was quelled by Louis XII. at the head of his own army, and with much bloodshed, in the first days of 1507.[1]

The assertion of French prowess immediately called upon the scene another rival of France, in the person of Maximilian. This fantastic monarch, with his changeable character, and greed for adventure, found himself at the head of a nation not wanting in strength, but considerably weakened by the ravages of political disturbance. The Holy Roman Empire had been transformed into the Germanic Empire, by the formation of nationalities in other States which had achieved independence. Over Italy the Empire had but little influence; and none at all over Spain, France, or England, who were now indeed its formidable rivals. The princes, bishops, and free cities forming its components were likewise animated by a spirit of independence, that greatly undermined the authority of Maximilian. For, whereas he was supreme in the Archduchy of Austria, and his other proper States, and also as feudal lord in Alsatia, Suabia, and elsewhere, he was of small account as King of the Romans. Even in Germany a feeling of nationality was now in process of formation, tending to unite all scattered elements under a central authority, and favourable to any representative of the unity of the Empire But there was one obstacle. Maximilian wished to reconstitute the Empire in the interest of the Hapsburgs, by means of a Council nominated by and dependent upon himself, whereas the German patriots desired an oligarchy placing all power in their own hands, and making the emperor himself their subordinate. Thus, there were stirring at the same time the interests of the House of Hapsburg and those of the States in its possession, the need of local independence, the growing sentiment of nationality and Germanic unity, and the still potent traditions of the Empire: and all these constituted a medley of elements that could neither be separated nor brought into harmony.[2]

[1] Henry Martin, "Histoire de France," tome vii. liv. 45 (4th edition); Dareste, "Histoire de France," Paris, Henry Plon, 1866, tome iii. liv. xix. p. 410 and fol.

[2] W. Maurenbrecher, "Studien und Skizzen zur Geschichte der Reformationszeits," Leipzig, 1874, p 101 and fol.; Bryce, "The Holy Roman Empire," London, ch. xvii.; Ranke, "Deutsche Geschichte in Zeitalter des Reformation"; Berlin, "Duncker und Humblot," 1852.

cellent infantry to join in any war for the defence or offence of any State; but their services had to be bought. Louis XII. had gold, but Maximilian had none, and vainly endeavoured to obtain it. Thus, even among the Alps, Germany and France were in conflict, and in a country that but a few years before had acknowledged the supremacy of the Empire every advantage was on the side of the rival power.

In 1507, Maximilian demanded an army from the Diet of Constance, in order to reconquer the Milanese territory, seize the crown, and re-establish the Imperial authority. The Diet declared itself in favour of the enterprise; but wished it to be undertaken in its own name, and with generals of its own choice, whereas Maximilian desired to lead it himself in the name of the Empire.

From this, one of the usual matters of dispute in Germany, the usual consequences arose, namely, temporary and insufficient arrangements The Emperor was granted 8,000 horse and 22,000 foot soldiers, but for six months only, dating from the middle of October, and 120,000 Rhenish florins for artillery and extraordinary expenses[1] With Maximilian's well-known vacillation and lavishness, it was to be expected that by the end of the six months he would be again without money or men, and without having even commenced his campaign. Nevertheless, finding himself, as Guicciardini phrased it, "on board ship, with scanty store of biscuits,"[2] he seemed on this occasion determined to act promptly. In fact, he at once divided his army into three detachments: one to march on Besançon to threaten Burgundy; the second into Carinthia to threaten Friuli; the third towards Trent, whither he went in person, to hold Verona in check. According to his usual custom, he arranged these manœuvres with the utmost secrecy, remaining in retirement, and directing that all ambassadors accredited to him, should not pass beyond Botzen or Trent. He was much enraged against Venice; for that State, instead of joining with him, had allied herself with France, who had guaranteed her territories on the mainland, and to whom in return she had guaranteed those of Milan, and promised to oppose armed resistance to the passage of the Imperial troops. Louis XII., therefore, having provided for the defence of Burgundy, despatched G. J. Trivulzio at the head of 400 lances and 4,000 infantry to reinforce the Venetians, who had sent the Count of Pitigliano with 400 men-at-arms towards Verona, and Bartolommeo d'Alviano with 800 men-at-arms into Friuli.[3]

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. iii. bk. viii. p. 281.
[2] Ibid, chap xxx. p. 346.
[3] Guicciardini, Leo, Sismondi.

by Germany in order to injure France. But after the treaty of Blois, Louis XII, feeling safe from Spain, took courage, and Maximilian perceiving that war was inevitable, tried to collect men and money.

France had not kept her promise of giving Charles, nephew, and, afterwards, successor, to the Emperor, the king's daughter, Claude, to wife; and thereupon Maximilian refused the investiture of the Duchy of Milan, in order to gain that State for himself. The submission of Genoa, and its encouraging effect upon the French, induced him to hasten his descent into Italy, for the purpose of taking possession of the crown, becoming lord of Milan and re-establishing everywhere the Imperial dominion. Julius II. watched these movements with an anxious eye, wishing to direct them according to his own desires, which all tended to one end. This was the re-acquisition of the territories he considered to have been torn from the Church, particularly those occupied by Venice, towards which State he appeared to nourish an inextinguishable hatred. Already, by means of keen-witted legates, he was laying the threads of his future policy. So far, however, his designs had failed, for it was impossible to reconcile Germany with France, who on her side was drawing nearer to Venice. Maximilian still persisted in his scheme of coming to seize the crown, even though he had to encounter both French and Venetians on the road. Thus men's minds in Italy were kept in perpetual tension, the Pope's no less than the rest, for he could not tolerate that the course of events should proceed independently of his influence. And if the rumour of Maximilian's wild idea of becoming Pope ever reached his ears, it must have caused him much annoyance, however incredible and puerile the notion was in itself.

But to enter Italy Maximilian required both men and money; and both were lacking. To obtain the first he might turn to Switzerland, for that country, since her fierce and heroic resistance against Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy (1476–77), had become a rich mine of fighting men. However, Switzerland was now only nominally a portion of the Empire, and Maximilian himself had been obliged, after the obstinate struggle of 1499, to recognize the independence of the Helvetic Confederation. This was speedily joined by Basle and Schaffhausen, by Appenzell a little later. It thus comprised thirteen cantons, to which other small republics were bound by ties of varying strength, among them that of the three Rhetian Cantons, known in Italy as the Grisons League, and which at the present time are an integral part of the confederation under the name of Canton Grisons. All these republics were now ready to send their ex-

time after, it became necessary to dismiss Don Michele, the Bargello (or commander) of the infantry, because his dishonesty and violence plainly showed the evil results of employing rogues in the service of the Republic. Even this measure excited ill-natured remark. No one, it is true, defended Don Michele, but it was said "that it would have been well rather to put him secretly to death, than to send him away too much our enemy." Fortunately it was not in his power to do further harm, for in the February of the following year, while leaving the house of Chaumont one evening, he was murdered by some Spaniards who had been present; and thus "lost his life, as he had made many others lose theirs."[1]

Still more lively disputes were excited by the despatches of Francesco Vettori. He wrote that for the present Maximilian would be content with only fifty thousand ducats; but that he demanded instant payment of that sum, otherwise the Florentine orator would not again be admitted to his presence. And Vettori added, that it was positively necessary to come to a decision, since German affairs became daily more inflamed. Therefore Florence must either pay the tribute and make an enemy of France, or

[1] Parenti, "Historia," &c., cod ii., iv., 171, sheet 2, October, 1507 (original MS). Parenti's words teach us the kind of morality then prevailing in public affairs. Soderini was blamed and attacked, for not having put to death secretly and without trial, a man up to that moment in the employment of the Republic. Strange, too, that this infamous assassin (known as the Strangler), so long one of Valentino's most faithful instruments, should not only have obtained official employment in Florence with so much ease, but should have enjoyed the protection of many Cardinals In fact, at the time when he was a prisoner in the hands of Julius II., who hesitated what to do with him, the Florentine ambassador, Giovanni Acciaiuoli, wrote from Rome to the Ten, under the date 20th October, 1504: "I will not omit to inform your Excellencies, that by reason of not having, *ut aiunt*, found Don Michele guilty of any crime deserving death, and because ten Cardinals have interceded for him, all Rome declares that he will be set at liberty." Rumour was verified by the event (*Florence Archives*, cl. x. d st 4, No. 82 at sheet 46*t*).

We have elsewhere noted (p. 285) how this man, styled by nearly every one Don Michele the Spaniard (Parenti frequently alludes to him under that name), was by some erroneously supposed to be of Venetian birth on the strength of a letter by Niccolò degli Alberti, Commissary of Arezzo We then said that the letter, alluded to in a note to the "Opere," was not to be found, and that even were it found, its statements could not hold good against the testimony of chronicles and official documents. Since then we have by chance discovered this very letter in a file of autograph letters written to Machiavelli, belonging to Signora Caterina Bargagli, *née* Countess Placidi, and kindly placed at our disposal by that lady. Although this letter offers no evidence that can change our opinion, and has no historic value, yet as it has often been quoted, and is very brief, and refers to the time of Don Michele's dismissal, we have included it in the Appendix (II.) document iv. of the Italian edition. For a curious letter from Don Michele himself to Machiavelli, taken from the same collection, and giving some idea of the man and of his time, see Appendix (II.), document v. of Italian edition.

All now seemed prepared for a vast conflict, that might have the gravest consequences for Italy Little wonder, then, that great agitation should prevail, especially in Florence, whither Maximilian, in the name of the Empire, had sent a demand for the sum of 500,000 [1] ducats, as a subsidy towards his coronation journey. The Florentines were totally unable to pay so exorbitant a sum ; but even had it been much diminished, they would still have been in an extremely difficult position. On the one hand, they could not absolutely reject the demand, for fear of being exposed to the Emperor's wrath, if he really came to Rome ; on the other, they knew that any concession would cost them the friendship of France, for which they had already made many sacrifices. Soderini, being a declared friend of the French alliance, his enemies made use of this uncertainty to attack him, and were further incited to do so by the Imperial ambassador, who said evil things of "the Gonfalonier's tyrannical rule," and promised that his master would soon find a remedy for it.[2] This gave rise to an animated discussion, concluding with the proposal to follow the example of other Italian States by sending ambassadors to Maximilian ; but first of all to despatch some one to ascertain if he were really on the advance, since otherwise there was no necessity for coming to terms with him. Soderini, having the fullest confidence in Machiavelli, wished him to be the envoy, and even caused him to be elected by the magistrates. But so loud an outcry was raised against what was deemed an act of undue favouritism, that it was found needful to send Francesco Vettori instead, although even this measure hardly allayed the popular irritation.[3]

For now a party hostile to the Gonfalonier was in course of formation, and all pretexts were seized for attacking him. It was asserted that Florence had only nominal freedom, since all power was in the hands of one man, who gained adherents among the populace and men of little account, in order to put aside citizens of higher standing of whom he was jealous. The official director of the Mint had the strange idea of issuing florins stamped with the portrait of Soderini instead of the lily of Florence. Soderini disapproved of it and caused the coin to be withdrawn, but this did not save him from reproofs and satirical comments.[4] Some

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d' Italia," vol iii chap vii. p 299.

[2] Parenti, "Historia Fiorentina," Biblioteca Nazionale of Florence, cod. ii. 134 (copy), vol vi sheet 145. As in the case of Parenti, as well as Cerretani, we have sometimes made notes from two ancient copies, and sometimes from the original works, we are obliged to quote different codices.

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," chap xxx. p 340.

[4] Parenti, "Historia," &c. (copy), *loc cit.*, June, 1507.

refuse to pay and make an enemy of the Emperor. Accordingly, discussion in Florence grew more and more furious. After a lengthy debate, the *Pratica* decided on sending ambassadors, and the choice of the Eighty fell on Piero Guicciardini and Alamanno Salviati. Then, opposition was made to the Embassy in the Council of Ten and the Council of Eighty on the part of Guicciardini himself. He declined the post, alleging that it was useless to send ambassadors without authority to conclude an alliance, and that to conclude one amidst so much uncertainty was dangerous, inasmuch as they would lose the friendship of France without being assured of German assistance.

In this conflict of opinion the Gonfalonier deemed it best to carry the question before the Great Council, and allow every one to express his mind freely. At that time this was a very unusual measure, and being considered a violation of liberty, no one spoke a word. Usage demanded that the government should bring forward its proposal and that the citizens should decide from the benches (*pancate*)—each of which elected a representative, who had either to speak in support of and vote for the law, or remain silent if he intended to oppose it. To grant freedom of speech to all, appeared then, according to Parenti's expression, "an actual loss of liberty disguised under a show of wider liberty." [1] At last, as the best thing to be done, it was decided to fix an ultimatum of some feasible arrangement and forward it to Vettori, not however for immediate conclusion, but only to be used at his judgment, in case of urgent need. Thereupon the Gonfalonier, catching the ball on the rebound, succeeded in persuading the Ten of the imprudence of employing ordinary couriers for the conveyance of instructions of such exceptional importance. The despatches might be intercepted; it was therefore expedient to send a trusty messenger, able at need to deliver the instructions by word of mouth. Thus he gained his point of sending Machiavelli and establishing him beside Vettori, as he had long most ardently wished. The Florentines grumbled, of course, and it was said that Soderini had chosen Machiavelli because the latter was his puppet (*mannerino*), and could be made to write anything he liked, "as best suited their ends and designs." [2] The truth

[1] Parenti, "Historia," &c, cod. ii. iv. sheet 171 (original MS.).

[2] Cerretani, cod. ii. iii. 76, sheet 316 (copy). Cerretani's hostile feeling towards Soderini is proved by his assertion that the Gonfalonier sent Machiavelli in order that he should write in the manner agreed between them "with advices very similar to those of Francesco Vettori, which confirmed the coming of the Germans in the strongest terms" Had this been true, it would have been superfluous to take so much trouble to have Machiavelli chosen as messenger. Besides, it was generally known that Soderini's sympathies were on the side of France, not

no cause for surprise in Machiavelli's interest in studying a Republic maintained by its own strength, and sending the minutest particulars to the Ten, when we remember that he wished to see Florence established on a similar basis. Meanwhile, in order to conclude even this second letter with some point related to his mission, he mentions how at Constance he had diligently questioned one of the Duke of Savoy's orators as to whether Maximilian's enterprise would or would not be carried on, and had been told in reply: "Thou wouldst learn in two hours more than I have been able to comprehend in many months The Emperor acts with great secrecy; Germany is a very wide land, people arrive at different spots from very distant provinces; to know anything for certain, it would be needful to have many spies on all sides"[1]

Four letters follow, two of which, *i.e.* of the 25th and 31st of January, written almost entirely in cipher, contain insignificant and scarcely intelligible news, or else indecent illusions. In fact, they were merely written so that, in case of being intercepted by the enemy, it might be easier to save the two others giving intelligence of the persons surrounding Maximilian and of the stratagems employed by them.[2] Then, on the 8th of February, he sent a

5–58). In this (at pp 39–41) we find other remarks upon Switzerland, which it may not be amiss to compare with those of Machiavelli According to Quirini, the twelve Cantons could send abroad 13,000 foot soldiers, after providing for the defence of the country. The Grisons League could give 6,000 men, the Valais 4,000, St. Gall and Appenzell 3,800. Each Canton had its own banner, the twelve one in common, and the Grisons League the same No one could fight against his own flag or that of the Confederation without incurring the penalty of death and confiscation of his property. These flags could only be borne by soldiers sent abroad by agreement with the Cantons, or with the Confederation. Lodovico Sforza, the Moor, when attempting to reconquer his own State (1,500), hired many Swiss mercenaries of the kind designated as *Freie*, because they took service in small bands with all who would pay them, and had no flag of their own. It was for this reason that they refused to fight against the mercenaries of Louis XII, who bore a flag For had they done so, they would have forfeited both their citizenship and their property. Lodovico's defeat and ruin was caused by their defection, at least according to the account given by Quirini, who adds that the men of the Valais, the Grisons, Appenzell, and St. Gall would all have acted in the same manner.

[1] Letter of the 17th of January, signed by Machiavelli, and previously quoted.

[2] The two letters of the 25th and 31st of January are published in the "Opere" (P. M.), pp. 271 and 276; but in fragmentary fashion, since no interpretation is given of their principal portions in cipher. The following words are quoted from the letter of the 25th of January. (They, too, were in cipher, although the editors do not mention it.) "For this reason it is needful for me to tell you that this letter contains nothing; but is only written that the true despatches may be saved if this be found." We have ascertained that the other fragments in cipher contain, as the editors mention, nothing but jokes, indecencies, and nonsense.

The Emperor was at seven leagues from Trent, and was already hard-pressed for money; there would be therefore little difficulty in inducing him to be satisfied with a moderate sum, provided it were paid without delay. But this was exactly what neither Vettori nor Machiavelli had power to do[1]

The second letter, written the same day in Machiavelli's own name, gives minute details of his journey; and we note the remarkable care and attention with which he observed the countries through which he had so rapidly passed. "Between Geneva and Constance," he writes, "I made four halts on Swiss territory, and have applied my best diligence to the investigation of customs and characteristics I have heard that the chief mass of the Swiss is composed of twelve Cantons, bound together in such fashion that all decisions of their several Diets are respected by all.[2] Therefore, it is an error to say that four (Cantons) are with France, and eight with the Emperor. The truth is, that France has kept men in Switzerland who, by means of gold, have poisoned the whole country, both publicly and privately. If the Emperor were rich he might gain the Swiss, who do not wish to excite his enmity, but are unwilling to aid him against France, who has so much gold. Besides the twelve Cantons there are other Swiss, like those of the Valais and the Grisons League, who are on the Italian border, and not so strictly united with the former as to be unable to act independently of the deliberations of the other Diets. Nevertheless, they are all agreed as to the defence of their liberties. The twelve Cantons each contribute four thousand men for the defence of the country, and from one thousand to one thousand five hundred for foreign service. And this because, in the first case, all are by law compelled to bear arms; in the second, namely, when it is a question of going to fight elsewhere, no one need go, save of his own free will."[3] There is

[1] See the letters dated 17th and 24th of January, both signed by Vettori.

[2] In a short memoir read before an historical Society of one of the Cantons of Switzerland, in 1875, by M. Alexandre Daguet, the author says: "Machiavel en personne est venu en Suisse. Il a passé quelques jours sur nôtre territoire, bien peu de jours, il est vrai; mais un temps suffisant pour donner à cet esprit pénétrant par excellence l'occasion de se faire une idée exacte de l'organisation politique des Confédérés, du fort et du faible de leurs institutions, et pour qu'il ait appris à connaître les traits distinctifs du droit public qui unissait les 12 *Ligues* ou cantons, dont se composait en ce moment le corps helvétique." "Machiavel et les Suisses, Etude d'histoire nationale et étrangère" (extrait du "Musée Neuchâtelois," Juillet-Août, 1877), Neuchâtel, Wolfrath et Metzner, 1877. The Cantons numbered twelve at that period, Appenzell not having yet joined them

[3] Second letter of 17th of January. At that time the Venetian Ambassador with Maximilian was a certain Vincenzo Quirini, whose despatches are still unedited at Venice; but his Relation was published by Albèri (Series I., vol. vi., pp.

won their victories for them, and as the ground is trembling beneath their feet, one is doubtful of them. Therefore, in considering all these things, I dwell in uncertainty, inasmuch as for the accomplishment of your mission, the Emperor should attack and be victorious." To this letter, written as usual by Machiavelli and signed by Vettori, the latter added a few lines in his own hand, saying that in his judgment "it would be the most inopportune thing in the world to recall Machiavelli: that it was necessary for him to remain until everything was settled."[1]

Every despatch of this Legation treats of the same theme. The Emperor insists upon receiving the money immediately, and the Florentines raise disputes to gain time and give nothing, and profit by the increasing uncertainty and confusion of the state of affairs. An army of 400 horse and 5,000 foot entered Cadore, which was devoted to the Venetians, and on being joined by Maximilian with a body of 6,000 infantry, invaded and ravaged about forty miles of Venetian territory. Then suddenly the Emperor found his purse empty and hurried to Innsbrück to raise money on his own jewels. The two Florentine orators followed him thither and learnt that as he had not paid his Swiss soldiery, the Cantons had allowed France to hire infantry, and that this power had already 5,000, and the Venetians 3,000 Swiss in Italy. Meanwhile Bartolommeo d'Alviano surrounded the troops left in Cadore, and after slaughtering a thousand of them, captured the remainder by seizing the fortress of Cadore He then continued his march, the enemy retreating before him, captured Pordenone, which he held in fief, Goritzia, Trieste, and Fiume. The Germans hazarded an attack between Trent and the Lake of Garda, but although partially successful, it led to no results The two hostile armies remained fronting each other in the valley of the Adige; but before long the 2,000 Grisons men, receiving little pay from the Emperor, deserted the camp. Their example was quickly followed by others, and on reaching Trent they all dispersed. Maximilian had never been able to obtain from the Empire more than 4,000 foot soldiers at a time, and always for six months only; so that when one set joined him the others went away; and to collect a larger army would have required funds which he could not procure.

[1] "Opere," vol. vii, letter of the 8th of February, pp 186, 187. The words written in Vettori's hand were given very incorrectly in several editions; but in the "Opere" (P. M.) they were given in accordance with the original. For instance, where the old editions say: "Machiavello is in want of much money, for my part there shall be no lack even for him," it should stand thus: "As long as I have money for myself, neither shall Machiavello be in want of any" ("Opere" (P. M), vol. v. p 288).

letter from Trent, signed by Vettori, relating how Maximilian, having arrived there and being authorized by Julius II. to assume the title of Emperor elect, had marched on the fourth day of the month, with drawn sword and preceded by heralds, to the cathedral, where his Chancellor, Mathias Lang, Bishop of Gurk, had harangued the people and officially proclaimed that the Emperor was on his way to Italy to take possession of the crown.[1]

The same letter went on to relate the very singular manner in which the expedition had begun. The Marquis of Brandeburg had marched on Roveredo with 5,000 foot and 2,000 horse, and then suddenly retraced his steps. The Emperor, with 1,500 horse and 4,000 foot, had marched towards Vicenza, and had taken and sacked the Seven Communes which enjoyed self-government under the protection of Venice It was rumoured that he was laying siege to a castle, when it became known that he, too, had returned by Trent, and was stationed ten miles from the city on the road to Botzen. "Now I would fain inquire what the wisest man in the world could do, if employed on the mission with which your Excellencies have charged me. Had your letters[2] arrived three days ago, I should have immediately paid (the requisition), in the sure belief of the Emperor's coming, and I should have been approved, only to be condemned to-day in view of what has actually happened. It is difficult to forecast events The Emperor has many and worthy soldiers, but he has no money, neither is it apparent from what quarter he will get any, and he is too lavish of that which he has. Now, although in principle it is a virtue to be liberal, it is no use satisfying a thousand men when one needs twenty thousand, and liberality has no effect save on its objects He is skilled in war, patient of fatigue, but so credulous that many have doubts of the expedition, so that there is matter both for hope and fear. What renders credible his success is that Italy is on all sides exposed to rebellions and vicissitudes, and has no good soldiers; so that there have been miraculous victories and miraculous defeats It is true that there are the French with good soldiers; but as they are now deprived of the Swiss, who usually

[1] In this way the Emperor's coronation was then rendered independent of the Pope. "In dieser spaten Neuerung sprach Maximilian den Grundsatz aus, dass die in Deutschland fortdauernde Kaisergewalt von der Kronung durch den Papst unabhangig sei" (Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol viii p 48)

[2] On the 19th of January the Ten had written to Vettori that he might promise 40,000 ducats, paying the first instalment of 16,000 whenever Maximilian put his foot on really Italian soil. Trent could not be regarded as Italian territory, since the Emperor was free to go there whenever he liked, as though it were his own land Vettori was also empowered to promise even 50,000 and pay 20,000 at Trent; but only in case of extreme urgency and when the Emperor's coming was certain. Vettori was to be judge of the measure of urgency. "Opere" (P. M), vol. v. p 272.

He called a Diet at Ulm to demand fresh subsidies, and hastened to Germany; but suddenly vanished from sight and went into hiding at Cologne, where he received intelligence that the Diet had been prorogued without coming to any decision.[1]

Machiavelli's letter of the 22nd of March, 1508, from Innsbrück, after giving some of this news to the Ten, concluded thus: "You tell me that I may pay the sum offered, if I can believe, at fifteen *soldi* the *lira*,[2] that the Emperor will persist. But I believe at twenty-two *soldi* the *lira* that he will persist; I cannot, however, foresee whether he will conquer or if he will be able to go on; since up to the present, one of his two armies of six or seven thousand men each has been beaten, and the other has accomplished nothing. On the other hand, Germany is very powerful, and may, if she choose, gain the victory. But will she choose?" And Vettori added, that not being very well, he had decided to send Machiavelli to the Diet and as envoy to the Emperor. This proposal was immediately accepted by the Ten;[3] but could not be carried into effect, because persons about Maximilian, and in his confidence, sent them word that it would be better neither to go nor to send any one.[4] Accordingly the two orators remained where they were, to carry on the usual shilly-shally business, of which they were heartily tired. "Your Excellencies," they wrote on the 30th of May, "have spun so fine a thread that it is impossible to weave it. If you do not catch the Emperor in his extremity, he will claim more than you offer; yet if you catch him in this extremity, one cannot, as you wish, foretell his coming at fifteen *soldi* the *lira*. You must come to a decision, divine the less dangerous course, and entering upon it, settle your minds in God's name; for by trying to measure great matters like these with compasses, men are led into error."[5]

Nevertheless, events showed that the thread had not been spun so badly as the orators thought. On the 8th of June, they sent word that a truce had been concluded between Maximilian and Venice for a term of three years (6th of June, 1508). The Pope, England, Hungary, and the States of the Empire were parties to it

[1] Leo, "Storia d'Italia," bk. xi. ch. ii, § 5.

[2] We have elsewhere explained that these words signify: *with fifteen chances to twenty*, there being twenty *soldi* in the Florentine *lira*

[3] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p 317, in the letter of the Ten to Vettori, 9th April, 1508

[4] Letter of the 29th March, misdated 28th March in the "Opere" (P. M.). Both the original letter and official duplicate are to be found in the Florence Archives, "Dieci di Balìa carteggio, responsive," file 90, sheets 423 and 429, with the deciphered copy in Buonaccorsi's hand, sheet 434, always with the date 29th March.

[5] Letter of the 30th May.

reports, and are now able to appreciate its full value. But minute and practical as were the counsels given to Girolami, Machiavelli himself did even more and better than he advised. Especially so on this mission to the Emperor, when having no affairs of much gravity to occupy his time or attention, he devoted himself chiefly, and by his own desire, to an attentive and conscientious study of the country in which he was detained.

We have already seen how carefully he observed and described the general condition of Switzerland even when travelling in great haste. And now being again in Switzerland he began immediately, on the 27th of June, the next day after his arrival, to write his Report on German affairs ("Rapporto di cose della Magna"), in which he gave a very faithful portrait of the Emperor, and a general sketch of the country. To this sketch he subsequently attempted to give a more literary form, under the title of Portraits of German things ("Ritratti di cose dell' Alemagna"). It would appear that after the battle of Ravenna, here recorded, he had the intention of composing a longer and more important work upon Germany; but soon afterwards threw it aside, without adding any fresh matter to the fragment that remains to us. Neither is his Discourse upon German things and the Emperor ("Discorso sopra le cose d' Alemagna e sopra l'imperatore") of any importance. It dates from 1509, when Giovanni Soderini and Piero Guicciardini were accredited to the Emperor, and only consists of two pages, in which he merely refers to what he had already said in his Report. Accordingly the latter, substantially a brief relation in the Venetian fashion addressed to the magistrates of the Republic, is the only original and important work written by

difficulties that have no existence. Machiavelli says: "Every one who is *good* can faithfully execute a commission; the difficulty lies in executing it *sufficiently*." So at p. 60 Herr Heidenheimer disputes on the true meaning in this passage of the words *good* and *sufficiently*, whereas it is very clear that the author means to say that in order to be faithful it is enough to be good; but that to succeed *sufficiently*, or with requisite ability, something more is needed, namely, aptitude, prudence and sagacity. When Machiavelli says: "That to put your opinion in your own mouth would be odious," Herr Heidenheimer examines the signification of the word *odious*, the cause of this *odium*. "Worin dieses *odium* aber bestehe, wird nicht gesagt. Jedenfalls aber ist auf den ausserordentlich starken Ausdruck *odioso* sehr zu achten" (p. 64). But even here there can be no doubt of the meaning of the words quoted, which merely signify, that to express judgments in your own name, regarding the countries and personages to whom the ambassador is accredited, and regarding probable events, may generate odium, that is may offend some one's pride, may appear presumptuous, &c. For this reason those who are practised in the business are accustomed to write in similar cases: "Sagacious persons here deem that," &c. But notwithstanding some too finely drawn subleties, Herr Heidenheimer's work shows admirable industry and scholarship.

mats; and thus found an opportunity for studying that people, and bequeathing us a brief description of them. The Florentine orators were not, as the Venetians, required to draw up, at the close of their embassy, a general report on the state of the country to which they had been sent. But occasionally they found space in their despatches for very shrewd notes and considerations. Indeed, it was in work of this kind, that men like Guicciardini and Machiavelli took the first rank; and they also, either for their own pleasure or for the advantage of the magistrates, sometimes wrote full reports without being obliged to do so.

We have an "Istruzione" (or paper of instruction) written by Machiavelli in 1522, long after he was out of office, for his friend Raffaelo Girolami, who was accredited ambassador to the Emperor in Spain. In this, while giving advice on the best mode of conducting an embassy, he clearly indicates the method pursued by himself. "You must," he wrote, "carefully observe everything: the character of the prince and of those around him, of the nobility and of the people, and then furnish full details." He proceeds to offer rules as to what should be more particularly noticed in Spain, and tells him that an ambassador should gain a reputation as a man of honour, and not think one thing and say another. "I have known many who, in order to be deemed sagacious and wily men, have in such wise forfeited the prince's confidence, that it has afterwards been impossible for them to carry on negotiations with him." He also adds several suggestions on the smaller tricks of the trade. On this head he says, that when it is a question of drawing general inferences and trying to divine men's intentions or the more secret current of affairs, it is very odious to express your own opinion in your own name, therefore better, if only to give greater weight to your words, to put them in the mouth of well-known personages, saying, for instance: "Considering all that has been written; sagacious persons here present, deem that such and such results must follow."[1] In fact, we continually meet with this expression in his

[1] "Istruzione fatta per Niccolò Machiavelli a Raffaello Girolami," "Opere," vol iv. pp 177–182. This letter is dated 23rd of October, but no year indicated. However, Ferdinand of Aragon died in January, 1516, and was succeeded by Charles, nephew of the Emperor Maximilian. The latter died on the 12th of January, 1519; in the same year Charles went to Germany as his successor in the Empire, and in 1522 returned to Spain, whither Girolami was sent to him. Herr H. Heidenheimer, in a valuable study ("Machiavelli's erste Romische Legation Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doctorwuide," &c, Darmstadt, 1878), also mentions (at p 59 and fol) this "Istruzione," and giving it, as it seems to us, an undue importance not only examines it diligently, but almost as though it were a really scientific treatise. He seeks in it a mathematic precision of language, finds in some words a hidden signification they do not possess, and meets in this fashion

enough, says Mundt, to read the works of Luther, and the writings of his contemporary Fischart, to be convinced that virtuous German simplicity was only a dream at the commencement of the Reformation.

We have already noted, and shall often have occasion to repeat, that as regards statistics and minute exactitude in the definition of special facts, Machiavelli is often surpassed by the Venetian Ambassadors, who sometimes also surpass him even in scrutinizing the characters of personages with whom they were in contact, and divining their most secret intentions. But he is, however, unrivalled in defining the tendency and political value of peoples and princes, the general action that the latters' personal qualities exercise upon contemporary events, the essential nature of institutions and the effects produced by them. But, when it is necessary to divine what course the King of France or the Emperor will probably pursue from one day to the other; what passions or desires will move them at a given moment; then the Florentine Secretary is inferior to the Venetians and even to some of his fellow citizens—to Guicciardini, for instance. This was probably the reason why he was outstripped by many in the race, and never succeeded in attaining to the office of Ambassador. But whenever it was needful to define the elements of the political force of France or of Germany, of the King or of the Emperor, then his intellectual might asserted itself clearly, and he soared far above other men.

In Italy, observation of political and social facts is certainly of very ancient date; for we find as many examples of it among the Chroniclers of the fourteenth century, as among the men of learning and ambassadors of the fifteenth century, who have bequeathed to us some admirable photographs of the countries they visited and of the political personages with whom they were thrown. Machiavelli, however, was the first to discern the cohesion of social facts in a marvellously organic unity. For although Guicciardini, in his youth, collected many precious data upon Spain, and transcribed them with wonderful lucidity and precision, yet when he tried to amalgamate them in order to pronounce a comprehensive judgment on the character and political strength of the country and its government, his power failed him to a certain extent, as we shall have occasion to show later on. So it may be said that the immense material of observation, accumulated by Italy during many centuries, was first co-ordinated in Machiavelli's

haften, der Wirklichkeit nirgend entsprechenden Lichte zu sehen. Ein Original zu seinen Schilderungen, konnte er selbst nicht geshen, noch aus irgend einer anderen Mittheilung ubernommen haben, &c." (Ibid, p 220).

him on the subject, with the exception of a few small additions to be found in the fragment of the "Ritratti."[1]

The Report has been variously judged by German writers. Gervinus affirms that both this and another similar composition, of a little later date, upon France, prove the acuteness with which Machiavelli "could probe national characteristics, and the profundity with which he judged the political conditions and internal state of foreign countries, and the nature of nations and of governments. His statistical notices upon France are excellent; perhaps nothing better has ever been said regarding the Emperor Maximilian and the German government."[2] This opinion has been frequently expressed in Germany, down to the present time.[3] One writer, however, pronounces a very different verdict, *i.e.*, Professor Mundt, author of a work upon Machiavelli, far more recent but also far inferior to that of Gervinus. In his opinion, Machiavelli's estimate of Germany and the Germans is a phantasy partly inspired by the "Germania" of Tacitus, but without any connection with things as they really were during the early years of the sixteenth century.[4] The financial conditions described by him, the purity of manners, the liberty and equality for which he demands our admiration, are nothing, according to Mundt, but an idyl spun by Machiavelli's own fancy; since it is impossible to discover whence he derived the portrait that he offers us.[5] It is

[1] See the three compositions upon Germany in the "Opere," vol. iv. p 153 and fol.

[2] Gervinus, "Historische Schriften," p. 97. "Seine *Ritratti* von Frankreich und Deutschland beweisen wie scharf er in die Eigenthumlichkeiten der Volker einzugehen verstand, wie eindringend er die politische Lage, den innern zustand fremder Lander, die Natur der Nationen und der Regierungen beurtheilte Seine statistischen Notizen uber Frankreich sind ganz vortrefflich und uber den Charakter des Kaisers Maximilian und des deutschen Regiments ist vielleicht nichts besseres noch gesagt worden, als was er in seinen Berichten und gelegentlich sonst vorbringt."

[3] "Wie durfen es heute beklagen, dass einer Auslander schon in kurzer Frist dazu gelangte den zustand des Reiches vor vierthalbhundert Jahren so zutreffend zu erkennen, ohne dass die Deutschen etlichen Nutzen daraus gezogen haben" ("Der Patriotismus Machiavelli's," a paper by Herr Karl Knies in the "Preussische Jahrbucher of Berlin, June, 1871").

[4] "Dabei scheinen die Erinnerungen an Tacitus und dessen frische naturgluckliche Urgermanen zuweilen die Phantasie des Machiavelli unwillkurlich bestimmt und verwirrt zu haben. Jedenfalls sind ihm darauf unabweisliche Einflusse angeflogen, die ihm zu einer so wunderbaren, schon mit der damaligen Wirklichkeit durchaus nicht mehr harmonirenden, sondern zu einer politischen Fata Morgana verfluchtigenden Malerei verfuhren konnten" (Theodor Mundt, "Niccolò Machiavelli und das System der modernen Politik." Berlin, Otto Janke, 1861, p. 218).

[5] "Man weiss in der That kaum, wodurch Machiavelli darauf gefuhrt werden konnte, die Deutschen seiner Zeit auch in ihren Lebenssitten in einem so fabel-

examining, it is evident that when he speaks of Germany he not only includes Switzerland and Tirol, but also, these being the only two German-speaking countries he has visited, attributes to all the manners and modes of life he had observed there. His enthusiasm was roused by the spectacle of those proud, sober, warlike populations; in the "free freedom" ("libera libertà") of the Swiss Republics he recognized his ideal of an armed nation, and consequently held them up as examples to be imitated by Italy. The continual arrival of German troops, whose departure was the signal for the coming of others; the information he received from them of the many republics flourishing in their land; their martial aspect, and their military prestige, so strongly impressed his imagination, that in Germany he beheld a sober, liberty-loving country, entirely devoted to arms Thus, then, he described it; and more than once attributed to it the customs of Swiss and Tirolese, with whom it had certainly some points of resemblance and relationship. And this may serve to explain the inexactitudes noted by Mundt, who failed, however, to trace them to their real causes, and therefore arrived at no clear conception of Machiavelli's work.[1]

"There can be no doubt," says the Secretary, "of the power of Germany, with her abundance of men, money, and arms. The Germans spend little on administration, and nothing on soldiers, for they train their own subjects to arms.[2] On festival days, instead of playing games, their youth seek diversion in learning the use of the petronel, the pike, and of other weapons. They are frugal in all things, for they affect no luxury either in their buildings or their attire, and have but few chattels in their dwellings. It suffices them to have abundance of bread and meat, and to have stoves to protect them from the cold; and he who owns no other possessions, does without them and desires them not. Therefore their country exists on its own produce, without

[1] Herr H Heidenheimer, in his before-mentioned pamphlet, pp. 70–74, excuses Machiavelli for not having remarked the agitation of Germany, and the real state of the multitude, on the score that he had been little or not at all in the country, had no knowledge of the German tongue, and was acquainted with the grandees and the Courts but not with the people of Germany. This is true, but the omission remains the same.

[2] At p. 15 of Quirini's "Relazione," from which we have before quoted, the author, with a view to practical issues, discusses German men-at-arms, and compares them with the Italian, examining in what respects they are superior, in what inferior; concluding with a remark, which, as the official utterance of a Venetian ambassador, proves that Italians had already begun to lose their self-confidence. "All Germans like these are naturally more ferocious than our men, and have less fear of death than the Italians; yet they are neither so prudent, nor so disciplined as the latter, neither are they so skilful."

mind, thus laying the foundation of his future science of politics. Forecasts of this were already visible in his Report upon Germany, and in the similar Report he shortly after wrote upon France. In both, and especially in the former work, we also detect another quality, seldom ascribed to him, but without which many of his writings would be inexplicable. He was a follower of certain ideals, which so completely possessed his imagination that he sometimes beheld them where they did not exist. This gave a kind of personal colouring to the facts he narrated.[1]

Readers acquainted with the descriptions of Germany by Bracciolini and Piccolomini, who—particularly the second—had lived long in the country and minutely depicted it, with unceasing laments over its ignorance, roughness, and barbarism ; or those who have read the Travels in Germany[2] by the same Francesco Vettori who had been with Machiavelli in Tirol, and which contains little else than a collection of indecent stories, will find themselves in a new world on perusing the brief but eloquent pages in which Machiavelli records his hearty admiration for the same country. It is impossible not to be struck by the acumen with which, while extolling the simplicity of life and the military training of Germany, he recognizes the real strength of that nation even in the midst of the prevailing anarchy and political impotence, and demonstrates the weakness of Maximilian despite that monarch's good qualities, military valour, great popularity, and the vastness of his empire. And all this confirms the judgment pronounced by Gervinus.

We must, however, repeat that Machiavelli only passed through Switzerland rapidly, and had not gone beyond Innsbruck during his stay in Tirol. It is true that he had seen many Germans there, and conversed with some who spoke Latin and Italian, but he had not visited their country, and knew nothing of it from personal experience. And although knowing how to distinguish Switzerland from Germany, he seems often to consider them rather as portions of the same country than as two different regions, peoples, and nations We have noted that, as Commissioner with Albizzi to the camp before Pisa, he almost always spoke of the Swiss as Germans. And in the report we are now

[1] As we have previously remarked, Burckhardt was one of the first to notice this point in his work, "Die Cultur der Renaissance in Italien," dritte Auflage, Leipzig, 1877–78, two vols *Apropos* to Machiavelli he observes · "Seine Gefahr liegt nie in falscher Genialitat, auch nicht im falschen Ausspinnen von Begriffen, sondern in einer starken Phantasie, die er offenbar mit Muhe bandigt, vol 1 p. 82

[2] "Viaggio in Alemagna," published in Paris and Florence, Molini, 1837.

All these reflections are to be found almost identically worded, both in the "Ritratti,"[1] which contain little else, and in the second part of the "Rapporto."[2] The latter, however, being, as we have seen, almost an official report, speaks first of the state of affairs and the character of the Emperor; saying of him, that notwithstanding his apparent greatness and power, he was practically very weak, because Germany, being so divided and so jealous, never granted him necessary supplies "They say that his States return him a net revenue of 600,000 florins, and that his imperial office brings him 100,000 This should suffice for the pay of many men; but, owing to his great liberality, he is always without soldiers and without gold; nor can one see what becomes of his money. Prè Luca (the priest Luca dei Renaldi), who is always about his person, told me that the Emperor never took advice of any one, yet is advised by all; that he wishes to do everything himself, and does nothing in his own way, because whenever, in spite of the mysterious secrecy assumed by him, the course of events unveils his designs, he is always guided by those about him. His liberality and lavishness while obtaining him the praises of many, are his ruin, since all take advantage of him, all deceive him. And one who is about him told me that, although when once made aware of it he does not allow himself to be deceived anew; yet in so great variety of men and circumstances, it might happen to him to be deceived every day of his life, even if he always discovered the fact. But for these defects he would be an excellent prince, for he is virtuous, just, and likewise a perfect captain.[3]

citizens were put upon their honour to declare the amount of their property and pay a proportionate tax without any official investigation; and this was carried out without any ill results, so great, in his opinion, was the good faith of those citizens Mundt makes some sarcastic remarks on this head. But we may quote the words of an old and trustworthy German writer on the subject: "Egregia vero laus ab homini extero, et eo qui, institutorum et morum civilium diligens esset atque elegans spectator. Sæpius autem ille res Germanorum præ patriis laudare solitus erat Quod valde probat tributi a civibus accipiendi ex fide inventum, ad Norimbergensium præclarum civitatem, imprimis, opinor, pertinet: qui illum conferendi in publicum modum appellant *die Losung*, et præcipuæ dignitatis magistratum, quæstores ad id constitutos, *die Losunger*. Aliqua facultatum pars iureiurando promissa, pro censu cuiusque pecunia æstimato, ærario inseritur, sed clanculum: ne scilicet modus divitiarum aut inopiæ cuiusque, utrumque autem sedulo occultare solent cives, facile reliquis pateat. . . . Nobile nullum adeo et memoratu dignum morem a Vuagenseilio, in elegante copiosaque eius de hoc urbe commentatione, nusquam descriptum extare, dolendum est" (Joh. Frid. Christii, "De Nicolas Machiavelli, libri tres." Lipsiae et Halae Magdeb. 1731, p 108).

[1] "Opere," vol iv. pp 153–160.

[2] Ibid., vol iv. pp 168–173

[3] The portrait of the Emperor, drawn by the Venetian ambassador Quirini, at pages 26, 27 of his "Relation," answers precisely to this by Machiavelli, and con-

needing to buy from others; they sell things fashioned by their hands, which are scattered over nearly the whole of Italy, and their gains are all the greater because earned by labour with very little capital. Thus they enjoy their rough life and liberty, and for this cause will not go to war, excepting for great recompense; nor would even that suffice, but for the decrees of their communities" Here we seem to be listening to a reminiscence of Tacitus in his "Germania." There is, as it were, a tone of pain, betraying a soul wounded by the unexpressed comparison that Machiavelli is instituting between Italy and the country he describes. It is as though he cried impetuously to the Ten: Behold how you should order the Republic if you truly desire its freedom and strength! The splendour of Italian arts, letters and wealth, that had blinded the judgment of so many of our writers, who therefore despised foreigners, never dazzled the eyes of Machiavelli. His keen glance pierced straight to the primary source of things; and in the corruption of his country he discerned the inevitable cause of her future woes.

But as he goes on he comes nearer to reality, and describes it with greater fidelity. "All Germany is divided between communes and princes, who are the enemies of one another and all enemies of the Emperor, to whom they will not give too much power, lest he should subjugate their land as the kings have done in France. And this is understood by all; but few understand for what reason the free cities of Switzerland show so much hostility, not only to the princes and Emperor, but likewise to the communes of Germany, with whom they share both the love of liberty and the need of self-defence against princes The true reason is that the Swiss are enemies, not merely of the Emperor and princes, but also of the nobility of Germany; since in their own country there is none, neither any distinction among men, saving of those acting as magistrates, and all enjoy a free freedom. Thus it comes about that the German nobles do their utmost to keep their communes divided from the Swiss On the other hand, the Emperor, being opposed by the princes, aids the communes, who are Germany's backbone, and thus they (the nobles) find themselves weakened, being attacked on both sides, and their States divided among many heirs. And added to this are the wars of the princes and communes among themselves, against one another, and of both against the Emperor; so that it is easy to comprehend why, notwithstanding the great strength of the country, it is in fact much enfeebled."[1]

[1] Even in his "Discorsi" (book i. chap lv.), Machiavelli greatly extolled Germany, recording a law existing in some of those republics, according to which the

withstands their first onslaught, they become so timid as to seem like women; the which indeed was noted by Cæsar, who said of them, that at first they were more than men, at last less than women. And therefore, he who would overcome them must play with them and ward off their first attacks. They cannot endure prolonged hardship; therefore, in such case, it is easy to rout them when they have been thrown into disorder, as we have seen proved on the Garigliano during the last war with the Spaniards.

"The country is very rich in agricultural produce, but poor in money, everything going into the hands of the nobles and the bishops; these latter absorb two-thirds of the riches of the kingdom, and have exceeding political power, being very numerous in the Councils of the throne. The people of France are humble and most obedient, and hold their King in great veneration. They live at very slight expense, through the great abundance of animal food, and every one also has a little land[1] They dress coarsely, and in garments of small price; they do not wear silk of any kind, neither they nor their womenkind, for they would be marked by the nobles."[2] And at another page of these "Ritratti," always written in detached paragraphs, Machiavelli says: "The French nature is greedy of others' goods, and then prodigal of its own and others' property. And therefore, the Frenchman would steal with his very breath in order to devour and waste and enjoy it with him from whom he has stolen: a nature contrary to that of Spaniards, who never let you see any trace of what they have robbed from you"[3]

Evidently Machiavelli had no sympathy either for the French or for France, with whom he was much better acquainted than with Germany; but the Republic had no reason to be pleased with the French And we find another proof of this antipathy, even in the few and brief detached reflections in his works entitled: "Of the nature of the French"[4] ("Della Natura dei Francesi"). "They are very humble in bad fortune, insolent in good. They are rather cavillers than men of prudence. They weave well their bad and roughly laid warp. They are vain and frivolous.

[1] "Opere," vol iv. p. 142. This shows that even in those days small holdings were general in France.

[2] "Opere," vol. iv p. 142.

[3] Ibid., vol iv. p 139 Guicciardini, in his "Relazione sulla Spagna," 1512–1513 ("Opere Inedite"), vol vi. p. 277, says of the Spaniards. "Being astute, they are good thieves; and therefore it is said that the Frenchman is a better lord than the Spaniard, for both despoil their subjects; but the Frenchman spends (his money) directly, the Spaniard accumulates it; and also the Spaniard, being keener witted, must know better how to thieve."

[4] They consist of little more than a single page. "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 151, 152.

"His coming into Italy gives alarm to all men; for it is known that his needs would grow with victory unless his nature were entirely changed. And if the trees of Italy bore ducats for him instead of leaves, they would still fail to meet his requirements. Note, also, that from his frequent prodigality proceed his frequent needs, from his needs his frequent demands, and from these the frequent Diets; just as his feeble resolves, and their feebler execution, are the fruit of his scanty judgment. However, had he come, you could not have paid him by means of Diets."[1]

The Portraits of French things[2] ("Ritratti delle cose della Francia") are chiefly detached thoughts written after his last mission to France in 1510. Nevertheless, he remembers to note in them the increasing power of France, in consequence of her great centralization, resulting from the union and submission to the crown of the different provinces and the Barons. Thence a political strength within, a military strength without the kingdom, superior to the social and real power of the country; precisely the reverse of what he had observed in Germany. "All the nobility are devoted to military life, hence the French men-at-arms are of the best in Europe. The foot-soldiers, on the other hand, are bad, being composed of rabble and labouring folk subject to the Barons, and so oppressed in every act of life that they are vile. Exception, however, must be made of the Gascons, who being near to Spain, have something of the Spaniard, and are a trifle better than the others, although in recent times they have proved themselves rather thievish than valiant.[3] Yet they behave well in the defence and attack of fortresses, although badly in the open field.[4] In this, too, they are the reverse of the Germans and Swiss, who are unrivalled in the field, but worth nothing in attack or defence of fortified places. For these reasons the kings of France, putting no faith in their own infantry, hire Swiss and *landsknechts*. In point of fact, the ferocity of these men is greater than their bravery and skill, and if the enemy

cludes by saying "that he always leaps from one decision to another, and thinks of so many improvements to each, that he misses both the time and opportunity for accomplishing anything."

[1] "Rapporto," &c. "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 165–168. [2] Ibid., p. 133 and fol.

[3] "Opere," vol. iv. p. 153 and fol. The Gascons, and more particularly the Basques, who were often confused with them, formed a light infantry that had high repute in France.

[4] Even during the last Franco-Prussian war, the Germans accused the French of behaving indifferently in the open field, and of always preferring to fight behind cover of some sort. "Always to fight behind cover, and always to be covered by their fortresses, such are their tactics," was what we read in the German journals of the period, although the wars of Napoleon had caused a different opinion to be formed.

history of Germany, who to this day maintains the federal form, and notwithstanding her many triumphs is exposed to internal struggle by the diversity of her constituent elements. That which totally escaped Machiavelli, that of which he has no word to say, was the vast religious agitation then in course of preparation. This may be explained, not only by his never having sojourned in the interior of Germany proper, and by his ignorance of the language, but still more by his profound indifference to religious questions, and very scanty knowledge of them. This defect, however, was common in his time to the majority of Italians.



No Italians get on well at Court, save those who have nothing more to lose, and fish in troubled waters."

In the "Ritratti" he also passes in rapid review the various States bordering on France, in order to show that she has no great danger to fear from any one. He alludes to the imposts, to the revenues of the country, speaks of the forms of government, of the army, the universities, of the administration, and above all of the royal prerogative and power, which were almost unbounded. They are hasty, brief, detached remarks, resembling notes jotted down on a journey.

But the principal point demanding our attention in this, as well as in the discourse upon Germany, is the author's continual, almost involuntary and irresistible tendency to accumulate special particulars regarding a few general facts, such as the nature of the country, the character of the people, the tendency of the government. Thus, these become the centre from which his observations diverge, and to which they return, the key explaining the social and political conditions under his notice. In France he pauses to contemplate the association of all men and all national activities under the unity of one supreme command, and sees that this leads to an augmentation of political and military strength. It does not, however, escape him, that all this may be dangerous in the long run, inasmuch as individual liberty is sacrificed by it, and the mass of the people oppressed. Many centuries have gone by, many different and famous events, many revolutions, yet the justice of his verdict is still unassailed. To this day France suffers from her centralization, which, as Tocqueville [1] showed us, and as we find in these notes of Machiavelli, is of far older date than is generally believed. To this day, also, has endured the excessive power of the clergy that he observed in his time. Even the great prevalence of small landholdings, upon which so much has been written, declared by so many to be the direct outcome of the Revolution and entirely modern, is of far older origin, and, as we have seen, did not escape the Secretary's eye In fact, nothing ever escaped him that was of any political, real, or general importance.

In describing Germany he started instead from the point of view of the great variety of customs and interests, of local passions and franchises. Even if these generated confusion and deprived the government of unity of action, they did not sap the strength of the country, which even in the midst of disorder was nourished by individual independence and military training. For centuries this has remained the dominant fact and characteristic in the

[1] In his excellent work, "La Révolution et l'Ancien Régime."

women, many of whom died of exhaustion.[1] Nevertheless, the project was carried through, for it was now decided to bring the affair to an end, and the fitting moment seemed to have come.

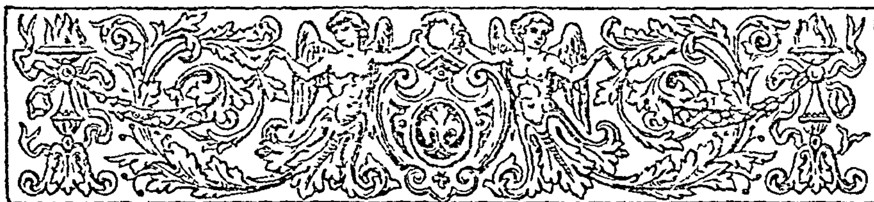
The Pisans were much cowed by the devastations inflicted upon them in June; and to reduce them still lower, the Florentines engaged Bardella, the Genoese corsair, at 600 florins the month, to blockade the mouth of the Arno with three vessels, and thus prevent any supplies from reaching the besieged city on that side[2] Machiavelli, who during March and April had been sent about the Florentine territory to enlist infantry, was stationed in the camp from August to November as paymaster to the troops. There he pushed on the operations of the war and ordered the continuation of the work of destruction; moved about collecting reinforcements and proposing the election of regimental corporals. At his instance, we find that the Nine nominated about four hundred in a very short space of time.[3] The Ten seemed to have entrusted him with the entire conduct of the campaign In fact they wrote to him on the 18th of August: "Thou art prudent, and being in the secret of everything, it is unnecessary to further explain our wishes to thee."[4] And in October, not only did he repeat the August ravages on the Pisan lands, but even laid waste the lands near Viareggio belonging to Lucca. In this way he compelled the Lucchese to make an agreement for three years, solemnly binding

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p. 351.

[2] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 134 and fol; Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," pp. 351, 352

[3] "Opere" (P. M), vol v. p. 343, and "Scritti Inediti del Machiavelli," pp 339-341.

[4] Letter of the 18th August, 1508, "Opere" (P. M), vol. v. p 338. With it they sent him 500 ducats See at the same place the patent dated 16th of August These Commissions to the camp and through the territory are to be found in the "Opere," vol. vii. Other documents relating to the same subject are to be found in the "Scritti Inediti" and in the "Opere" (P. M), vol. i. and vol. v. These documents show that in March and April, 1508, Machiavelli employed 34 days in travelling about the territories of the Republic, "to collect foot soldiers, and received 17 broad florins for his expenses" ("Opere" (P. M), vol. i p. 69) Eight hundred broad florins were sent to him on the 18th of August, for payment of the men and for the devastation of Pisan lands (Ibidem, p. 71) In October he was sent round to recruit soldiers and lay waste the crops of millet and oats (Ibidem, p 71) In March, 1508-1509, he received 12 broad florins for the expenses of 24 days' travel with three horses, to elect the corporals of the companies. Then further sums were sent to him for the pay of the infantry: at one time 283 broad florins, 6 soldi, and 10 denari; at another, 285 florins and 5 lire, and so on In the month of May we find him at Pescia and Pistoia to collect bread and provisions In June he received a payment of 8 lire the day, for the 89 days he had been travelling hither and thither. ("Opere" (P. M), vol i p 72) All this shows the accumulation of business to which he had to attend, and how he was always on the move.



CHAPTER XI.

Fresh devastation of Pisan territory—Negotiations with France and Spain—Pisa is pressed on all sides—Machiavelli goes to Piombino to arrange terms of capitulation—Pisa surrenders, and is occupied by the Florentines.

(1508–1509)



ON the outbreak of the Genoese revolution in 1507, Louis XII. had promised the Florentine ambassador, Francesco Pandolfini, that, in the event of having to bring an army into Italy to reduce that city, he would also halt in Tuscany to accomplish the subjection of Pisa to the Florentines. And this he asserted and caused to be asserted with so much persistence, that it was even agreed what sum should be given to him when all was completed But after subduing Genoa, he went back to France, as usual failing to keep any of his promises to the Florentines.[1] Therefore, as soon as the latter were free from fear of Maximilian, who had withdrawn after making truce with the Venetians, they felt that they had a right and were in a position to attend to their own affairs, counting only upontheir own resources. They decided to make a beginning by ravaging the Pisan territory, a measure neglected by them during the previous year. The antagonists of the Gonfalonier immediately raised a lively opposition, and were joined by others, who began to perceive the cruelty of the thing, and felt pangs of conscience on seeing the extreme misery to which the Pisan peasantry were reduced, and particularly the sufferings of the

[1] See the Legation of Francesco Pandolfini in Desjardins, "Négociations diplomatiques," &c., vol. ii. p. 199 and fol

been obliged to sign a second treaty with France alone, promising to pay her another 50,000 ducats under pledge of the strictest secrecy, to avoid rousing the jealousy of Spain, who would then have insisted on receiving the same amount.[1] In short, the Republic was to disburse over 150,000 ducats to her friends, to gain their permission to exercise the rights naturally belonging to every State.

Meanwhile, however, Florence had pushed on the war. Machiavelli was still at the camp, and the Ten wrote to him on the 15th of February, authorizing him to give all requisite orders, "inasmuch as we have placed all this charge upon thy shoulders."[2] It was an immense responsibility for a man like himself, untrained in war; but he accomplished miracles, by attending to everything with feverish energy, and matters progressed very satisfactorily. The Genoese had ordered the withdrawal of the corsair Bardella, and their merchants instantly sailed in with corn ships to carry help to the Pisans up the Arno. On the 18th of February, however, they were repulsed, for some men-at-arms, 800 militia infantry and a few guns had been sent to San Piero in Grado, in time to hold the mouth of the river.[3] A band of equal strength was sent into the valley of the Serchio, to guard the mouth of the Fiume Morto, a canal by which boats passing by Osole or Oseri brought succour to Pisa. Afterwards, the celebrated architect, Antonio San Gallo, came with a band of axemen and sawyers and a quantity of timber, to construct a dam across the Arno to exclude future supplies. Machiavelli ordered the instant construction of a similar work across the Fiume Morto.

In conducting these affairs he corresponded directly with the Ten, without paying much deference to the Commissary-General Niccolò Capponi, who though but ill-pleased, remained quietly at Cascina. Soderini therefore sent a friendly remonstrance to Machiavelli, bidding him to try and save appearances at all events[4] Accordingly Machiavelli wrote at once to inform the Commissary that he was at the mill of Quosi, "to watch lest any other boat should try to enter, in order to stop it, as they had stopped the first."[5] But after this he went on as usual, for there was no time to think about etiquette. He hastened to Lucca to protest against the help continually sent thence (to Pisa), and obtained a promise

[1] Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. ii. pp. 256–297. See more particularly the letter of the 13th of March, 1509, at p. 293.
[2] "Scritti Inediti," pp. 347, 348
[3] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p 138.
[4] Letter of Andrea della Valle, 19th of February, 1508–9. "Opere" (P. M.), p. 353.
[5] "Opere," vol. vii p 240. Letter of the 20th of February.

them to give no more help to the Pisans, either in men, money, or provisions.

But when France perceived that in this way the Florentines were bringing the war with Pisa to an end without her help and without any advantage to herself, she hastened to protest. She protested against the devastation carried on without the previous permission of the King; protested against the treaties of agreement with her enemy the Emperor; and threatened the instant despatch to Pisa of General G. J. Trivulzio, with three hundred lances, so that the surrender might not take place without her assistance, and she might thus be able to urge fresh and greater pretensions. It was easy for the Florentines to prove that France had not the least right to complain, and that her pretensions were absurd; but it was not possible to withstand the pertinacious demands of the King, who was determined to have money at any rate. They already knew that Julius II. had finally succeeded in his long meditated design of the League of Cambray, by which, in December, 1508, Pope, Emperor, Spain, and France joined hands for the destruction of Venice. It is true that this event, by distracting general attention and schemes of war from Tuscany, left her freer to do and dare; but on the other hand, the obligation contracted by France of marching a numerous army into Northern Italy, rendered that power still more greedy of money, more dangerous, and more dangerously near.

For this reason the ambassadors Alessandro Nasi and Giovanni Ridolfi were now at Blois, with instructions to come to terms and pay as little as possible to France and to Spain, who had quickly asserted equal pretensions. The latter power was ready to sell the ancient friendship for the Pisans which, as she now affirmed, she had always preserved; while the former was disposed to sell to her ever faithful allies, the Florentines, their own undeniable right to provide for their own interests with their own resources. Nevertheless it was necessary to yield. The negotiations proceeded slowly, for disputes arose, not only upon the sum to be given, but also as to the method of payment. And meanwhile it was needful to make donations to Rubertet and the other ministers of France and Spain, who, after graciously accepting them, asked for more, and showed no haste to bring matters to a conclusion. At last Nasi and Ridolfi wrote, that on the 13th of March, 1509, a treaty had been signed by which the Republic was bound to pay 50,000 ducats in several instalments to the King of France, and as much to the Spanish monarch, to whose ambassador they had also been obliged to promise a fee of 1,500 ducats, on his refusal to be content with one thousand only. Nor was that all. They had

fore a third camp was formed at Mezzana, whence other tracks could be watched, and Capponi was sent there as Commissary. Each of these blockading camps, depriving Pisa of all possibility of help, was to contain one thousand men, two-thirds of whom were of the Florentine militia.[1]

Before all these plans could be carried into effect, Machiavelli received orders by a despatch of the 10th March, to go to Piombino, where a Pisan delegation was coming with a safe conduct, to propose terms of surrender.[2] As it was feared that this was only a pretext of the Pisans to gain time, the Ten commissioned him to come to a clear understanding of their purpose, with instructions to insist upon unconditional surrender, and to instantly withdraw should the envoys be unauthorized to agree to it.[3] The city of Pisa was reduced to positive extremity. By the formation of their three camps, the Florentines had cut off every chance of help from without, either from Lucca or the coast; and now, after the sums paid to Spain and France, enjoyed full liberty of action. The great war now impending, in consequence of the League of Cambray, kept both the forces and attention of the great potentates, including the Pope, concentrated in Northern Italy, and therefore left the Pisans without hope of assistance even from that quarter. Thus far, it is true, they had maintained a long, heroic, and successful defence, and would certainly have continued it longer, had not serious internal disorders, no longer to be warded off, been added to all their dangers from without.

The obstinate energy of their defence was mainly attributable to this, that, whereas the Florentines had hitherto carried on the war by means of mercenary or auxiliary troops, they had not only armed all their citizens, but even the inhabitants of the outlying territory, and also granted the latter a share in the government. This union, unprecedented among our Republics, had enormously strengthened the defence, and evoked instances of virtue, self-denial and heroism, such as were seldom witnessed in the Italian

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," ch. xxxiii. pp. 387, 388; Buonaccorsi, "Diario," pp. 138, 139.

[2] The embassy was composed of citizens and country folk. Guicciardini tells us, at p. 332 of his "Storia Fiorentina," that they were twenty in number: Ammirato ("Istoria Fiorentina," vol. v. ch xxviii. p. 497. Florence, Batelli, 1846–49) tells us that a safe conduct was granted to twenty-four persons. In the printed edition Machiavelli is made to say that with their followers "they were a string of 164, or more." "Opere" vol. vii. p. 255; and in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p. 392, we read "a string of 161, or more". The original MS., however, says: "a string of 16, or more." The stop after the 16, always placed after figures by old writers, had been mistaken for the figure 1.

[3] See letter and commission of the Ten, dated 10th March, 1508–9, "Opere," (P. M.), vol. v. p 384.

that a stricter guard should be kept.[1] By the 7th of March he had completed the barricade across the Fiume Morto, consisting of three rows of iron-bound piles under water, and was staying in the camp at Quosi to superintend the raising of the bed of the river Oseri by means of three small vessels captured from the Pisans, in order to make it fordable for the Florentine troops And on the 7th of March he wrote to the Ten, "that Jacopo Savelli had twice crossed and recrossed it with eight horses; and when our troops can cross, and carry fifty fascines with them, why then even the army of Xerxes might ford it." The same letter showed that his hopes ran very high. "The militia companies were excellent, and gave no trouble whatever. He believed that this time the Lucchese would keep their promise not to send succour, and prevent both private individuals from bringing supplies, and the Pisans from coming to fetch them. Otherwise, as he had told them, it was useless for them to make treaties with the Florentines, who could well make one weapon serve for two purposes.[2] His meaning was that the same precautions would have prevented succour from being sent by the Lucchese, or received by the Pisans

Matters having reached this point, the army being divided, and various operations about to be carried on, it appeared very strange that the weight of all things should still rest on the shoulders of Machiavelli, who was neither a General nor Commissary of War, but merely the trusted confidant of Soderini. Accordingly, the Council of Eighty elected two other Commissaries[3] in the persons of Antonio da Filicaia and Alamanno Salviati, who on the 10th of March came to Cascina to confer with Machiavelli and Capponi in order to settle what steps were required to bring the expedition to a speedy end. They decided to form three camps. One at San Piero in Grado, where Machiavelli and Salviati were to remain with Antonio Colonna to guard the Arno, the nearly finished bridge over the Fiume Morto, and the bastion erected for its defence. A second was to be established at San Jacopo, to prevent the Lucchese from sending help to Pisa by the valley of the Serchio; and here, Commissary Antonio da Filicaia was to be stationed. The mountain paths, however, by which the Pisans could fetch provisions from Lucca on foot were still open; there-

[1] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. pp. 373 and 378.

[2] Letter of the 7th of March, 1508–9. "Opere," vol. vii. p. 240.

[3] Guicciardini, never very well inclined towards Soderini, says that this choice was made so that "things might be conducted with better order and more reputation, since the only public official in the camp was Niccolò Machiavelli, Chancellor to the Ten" ("Storia Fiorentina," p. 381). Yet, as we have seen, Capponi also was there.

instead of two or three influential citizens, there was no one to meet them but an ordinary Secretary, not even one sent expressly from Florence. In any case they sued for peace, with security of life, property and honour; but they were not authorized to conclude terms. Upon this Machiavelli, being much dissatisfied, turned, after a few words, to the Lord of Piombino, and said "that he could make no answer, because they had said nothing. If they wished a reply, let them say something. Your Excellencies desired obedience, demanded neither their life, their property, nor their honour, and would allow them reasonable liberty." Then the Pisans brought forward their proposal of yielding the territory and being left shut up within their city walls. "Do you not see," replied Machiavelli, again addressing himself to the Lord of Piombino, "do you not see that they are laughing at you? If it is not intended to give up Pisa to the rulers of Florence, it is useless to enter into negotiations; and as to the security, if it is not intended to keep faith, there is nothing to be done." And afterwards he told the country folk, "that he regretted their simplicity, for they were playing a game in which, in any case, they must be the losers. If Pisa had to be taken by force, they would lose property, life, and everything. If, on the contrary, the Pisans were victorious, then the citizens would treat them not as equals, but as slaves, and would drive them back to their ploughs." At this point, one of the citizens present began to cry out that the terms were not suitable, since they tended to create division among them; but the country folk instead seemed ready to consent to the terms, and expressed a desire for peace. Machiavelli took no further concern in the matter, and left the next day, although on two occasions, even after he was already mounted, the delegates came back to him to try to renew the discussion.[1]

He was compelled to go instantly to Florence, to obey the imperative summons of the Ten.[2] But we soon find him once more at the camp of Mezzana, whence he wrote to the Ten, on the 16th of April, in reply to their invitation to go to stay at Cascina. After minute details of the condition of the army, stating that the infantry equalled any that could be had in Italy,

[1] "Opere" vol. viii. p. 249 and fol. Letter of the 15th March, 1508–9.

[2] The letter of the Ten is dated 5th of April, and bears the inscription C^{ito}_{ito} (or) sia per via. It ordered Machiavelli to be in Florence the same day, with all the men he had with him: "Haste as much as possible, for the case is urgent." This letter is published in the "Opere" (P. M.), among the documents of the "Commission to the camp before Pisa." Machiavelli, however, had already started, nor could he have been at Pisa if the order was to be in Florence the same day. To this letter the editors of the "Opere" (P. M.) add others found among the "Carte del Machiavelli," written from Florence in the name of the Ten, addressed

history of that period In fact, even Pisa's antagonists were filled with admiration at such examples, and Machiavelli saw in them fresh grounds for hopeful expectations of the national militia that he was now organizing. But the prolonged war had also given birth to other consequences. The peasant class, being always the first to be attacked and daily compelled to greater sacrifice of life and property, necessarily obtained a preponderant share in the government of the city. This, in short, had now become a military government of public defence; and naturally the chief power fell into the hands of those who showed most vigour in repulsing the enemy. But notwithstanding this, the citizens having more experience of public affairs, and greater political acumen, still continued to be able to direct matters according to their will:

Thus by slow degrees a genuine conflict of interests had arisen, for which it was difficult to find a remedy. The country round was all laid waste and exhausted; the Florentines showed that they no longer entertained any wish for revenge; they demanded unconditional surrender, but would treat all with the same humanity, as their own old subjects There was no reason why these conditions should not be acceptable to the inhabitants of the territory, who knew that, the war once ended, they would be treated as subordinates even by the Pisans, according to the general custom of all Italian Republics. Such conditions, however, were not at all agreeable to the inhabitants of the city, to whom an unconditional surrender implied loss of the independence that was dearer to them than all else in the world. Hence the disaccord of citizens and rustics The latter asserted that their lands were reduced to such a state that it was no longer possible to prolong the defence, and that they were ready to surrender; the citizens, on the contrary, were still obdurate, and created endless delays for the sake of gaining time. Now they proposed ceding the territory only, then they tried to terrify its inhabitants by asserting that these would bear the chief brunt of the Florentine vengeance. But the latter proved in a thousand ways their intention of showing clemency to all. Besides, the idea of ceding the territory alone was acceptable to no one, for in that case the war against the city would still continue, and the requirements of the siege would involve fresh devastation of the country round.[1]

Hence, the embassy sent from Pisa to Piombino consisted of country folk and citizens, who were not of the same mind, and Machiavelli already knew this and was soon to have fresh proof of it. On the 15th May, he wrote a report of his mission to the Ten The Pisans, who had arrived in great numbers, had complained that

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p 387 and fol.

with Alamanno Salviati and Niccolò Machiavelli, that they reached San Miniato the same evening[1] On the 31st, Machiavelli had returned to Cascina, and the ambassadors, after arranging in Florence the terms of surrender, which was, in fact, unconditional, although clemency was assured to them, returned to Pisa without delay. There was no time to be lost. On the 2nd of June three hundred starving people had sallied from the miserable city, and flocked to the camp at Mezzana, praying for bread, which was given them. The next day more famished bands poured from every gate of the city, and it was necessary to drive many of them back, or the whole camp would have been thrown into disorder.[2] On the 6th all was arranged for the entry of the Florentines the following day. The three Commissaries came to the camp at Mezzana to meet Machiavelli, who had received three thousand ducats for the soldiers' pay. An order was also received leaving to the Secretary the choice of the soldiers who were to enter the city, and these were to receive in anticipation a third of their pay, so that they might have no pretext for committing excesses[3] They waited a day, in order to enter on the 8th. Probably, although we have no certainty of it, astrologers were consulted in fixing the day and hour. All that we know is that, among the many letters then received by Machiavelli, we find one from his friend Lattanzio Tedaldi, earnestly advising him not to commence the entry into Pisa before half-past twelve, and, if possible, a few minutes after thirteen o'clock, an hour that had always been of good omen to the Florentines[4]

According to the unanimous verdict of contemporary historians, from that moment everything was carried on with the greatest humanity and kindness towards the unhappy city that had fought so well and suffered so cruelly[5] Not only did the Florentines abstain from all violence, not only did they carry in large stores of provisions and distribute them among the starving inhabitants, but they also restored to the Pisans all the real property they had previously confiscated, scrupulously calculating to the advantage of the original proprietors even the profits of the last year,

[1] Letter of the 24th of May, 1509, from San Miniato, written by Machiavelli and signed by Salviati, "Opere" (P. M), p. 417.

[2] Letter of the 3rd of June, 1509, "Opere," vol. vii. p 279. Letter of Antonio da Filicaia, 3rd of June, 1509, "Opere" (P. M.), vol v. p 423.

[3] "Opere," vol vii. p 284 and fol. "Opere" (P M), vol v p 427.

[4] "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No. 40. "Opere" (P M), vol. v. p 429

[5] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," bk viii ch. iii "On this occasion, the good faith of the Florentines was worthy of note; for, although full of so much hate, and exasperated by many injuries, they were no less faithful in the fulfilment of their promises, than easy and clement in making them."

he concluded by urgently praying them to leave him where he was, otherwise he should not be able to attend either to the infantry or anything else, whereas it did not signify whom they sent to Cascina. He added that he was aware that to stay at Cascina would be much less fatiguing, much less dangerous for him ; "but if I wished to avoid fatigue and danger, I should not have left Florence ; therefore, I beg your Excellencies to permit me to stay among these camps, and labour with these Commissaries on necessary matters ; for here I can be good for something, and there I should be good for nothing, and should die of despair ; therefore I again pray you to fix upon some other man."[1] The Ten replied, giving him leave to stay where he thought his presence most useful,[2] and he went backwards and forwards between the three camps, watching how things went on, and always being where his help was needed to see that the soldiers were properly cared for. At one moment he was paying the men, at another sending off provisions, at the next advising and directing the blockade operations, for cutting off supplies from the city.[3] On the 18th of May, he was at Pistoia to hasten the despatch of a delayed supply of bread, and giving stern orders against any repetition of the blunder.[4] And this unrelaxing vigilance at last produced the desired effect, for the Pisans were so hemmed in on all sides that they were driven to agree to surrender.

In fact, on the 20th of May, the three Commissaries wrote to the Ten,[5] announcing the arrival of four Pisans to ask for a safe conduct, in order to send ambassadors to Florence to arrange the capitulation. And on the 24th, the ambassadors, five citizens and four countrymen,[6] appeared in the camp, and travelled so rapidly

to Machiavelli at the camp, yet signed with his name, without any explanation of how Machiavelli could write letters from Florence to Machiavelli in camp before Pisa. It would seem that, as he still retained the office of Secretary to the Ten, the chancery sometimes continued the custom of placing the secretary's name at the end of official letters, either in full, or only in initials, even during the absence of the bearer of the name. Of course, neither letters nor signature are in Machiavelli's handwriting.

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. p. 258. Letter of the 16th of April, 1509.

[2] Ibid. (P. M.), vol. v. p. 401. Letter of the 17th of April, 1509.

[3] Letter of the 21st of April, from the camp of San Piero in Grado, "Opere," vol. vii. p. 262.

[4] Letter of the 18th of May, from Pistoia, "Opere," vol. vii. p. 265.

[5] It is in the Florence Archives, and is published in the "Opere," vol. vii. p. 267, and in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p. 413. It was written from the camp in the valley of the Serchio, by Machiavelli, who added in his own hand the three signatures of the Commissioners.

[6] The letter of the 21st of May, written by Machiavelli and signed by Salviati, mentions that there were to be five countrymen and four citizens ; but the mistake is corrected in the credentials given by the government of Pisa, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p. 415.

in the Florence chancery, told him that bonfires had been burning in the city since twenty-one o'clock, and that it was impossible to describe the public rejoicing: "every man *quodammodo* is going mad with delight. . . . *Prosit vobis* to have been present at a glory of this kind, *et non minima portio rei* . . . *Nisi crederem te nimis superbire*, I would venture to say that you, with your battalions *tam bonam navastis operam, ita ut, non cunctando sed accelerando, restitueritis rem florentinam.* I hardly know what I am saying. I swear to Heaven, so great is our exultation, that I would pen you a Tulliana (a Ciceronian oration), had I the time, *sed deest penitus*."[1] And on the 17th of June, his friend, Commissary Filippo da Casavecchia wrote to him from Barga: "May a thousand good fortunes result to you from the grand gain of this noble city, for truly it may be said, that you personally have had a great share in the matter. . . . Each day I discover in you a greater prophet than the Jews or any other generation ever possessed."[2]

Nevertheless, all these triumphs were not unfraught with danger for the future of Machiavelli, nor even of the Republic itself. On the one hand, he naturally became the object of increased jealousy and envy. Had not he, a simple Secretary, superintended a siege with almost greater authority than that of the War Commissioners? Had he not, too, had the good luck to achieve success, and thus put an end to the obstinate struggle that for so many years had exhausted the resources of the hostile cities? Then, on the other hand, this fortunate success made all men conceive the highest opinion of the new ordinance; so that Machiavelli and the others placed such unbounded faith in it, as to make it later the source of great and bitter disillusions. No one seemed then to perceive that all that the militia ordinance had really accomplished, was to lay waste the country, without encountering the enemy in battle; and keep strict watch to prevent supplies of provisions from reaching a city already so worn and exhausted by famine as to be no longer able to bring an army into the field. Neither did any one reflect that things might have gone very differently had it been a question of confronting disciplined and able soldiers in a pitched battle. This was an experience to be made at a later date, and then Florence learned to her own cost the danger of building on illusive hopes in time of war.

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," case vi. No. 43. This letter of Vespucci was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. note to p. 431.

[2] *Vide* "Appendix" (II.), document vi. of Italian edition. The original is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No 45; part of the fragment given above was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. v. p. 431.

up to the day of the conclusion of peace. The statement of the accounts was entrusted to the historian, Jacopo Nardi, who said that they were drawn up in a manner so favourable to the Pisans that it was as though the latter had dictated, instead of submitting to the conditions of the peace.[1] For the Pisans regained their old privileges, and the re-establishment of their administrative magistracies; their former freedom of commerce was restored to them; in law suits they were granted right of appeal to the same judges as the Florentines. But if all these things did honour to the conquerors, especially to Soderini and Machiavelli, who had had the chief share in making and carrying out the decrees, still they could not avail to satisfy the conquered Liberty, independence, and political rights were for ever lost! No Pisan could again hope to share in deciding the fate of his city, and therefore the principal families emigrated to Palermo, Lucca, Sardinia, and other parts. Many took service in the French army, then fighting against Venice in Lombardy, and afterwards sought in the South of France a home reminding them of their soft Tuscan clime[2] Among these exiles were the Sismondi, ancestors of the illustrious historian of the Italian Republics.

In these days, Nardi tells us, many thought of Antonio Giacomini, the first to place the war with Pisa on the right road towards a successful ending, and who had then, from others' envy, been left on one side; so that now, in his old age, blind and infirm, he was pining in neglect. By a strange caprice of fortune, the victory had been achieved by Machiavelli, who was no soldier. But his conscience could not reproach him, for he had never been one of those who despised Giacomini; on the contrary, he had always felt a sincere admiration for him, and lost no opportunity of declaring it. For it was the example and excellent military success of that General that had encouraged him to organize the militia, to whose efforts the surrender of Pisa was attributed.

At any rate, all things had gone well with the Secretary, and the clemency shown in taking possession of the city, increased his reputation for prudence and the influence of his name. Letters of congratulation poured in upon him from all quarters One dated the 8th of June, from Agostino Vespucci, his colleague

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. pp. 409, 410.

[2] Sismondi, "Hist. des Répub Italiennes," Bruxelles, 1838–39, vol vii. p. 244. "Capitolazione pei la resa della città di Pisa sotto il dominio della repubblica Fiorentina," in Flaminio Dal Borgo's "Raccolta di diplomi pisani," pp. 406–28, in 4°, 1765.

troops to the Oglio under the command of Niccolò Orsini, Count of Pitigliano, and Bartolommeo d'Alviano Orsini, however, being excessively prudent, D'Alviano excessively daring, and neither willing to yield to the other, the conduct of the war was very uncertain.

Their adversaries, on the contrary, went straight to the mark. On the 15th of April, Julius II issued his bull of excommunication against the Venetians and all who assisted them, empowering any one who could to make slaves of them after stripping them of their possessions. On the 14th of May, the French advanced guard, commanded by G. J. Trivulzio, passed the Adda and met the rearguard of the Venetians under D'Alviano. This commander, by making a halt while the remainder of the army marched on, found himself isolated, while the enemy on the contrary was continually reinforced by freshly arriving troops Seeing this, D'Alviano despatched messages to the Count of Pitigliano; but he replied, with his usual timidity, that the Senate did not wish any pitched battles at present, and that his colleague would do well to continue the march. Nevertheless D'Alviano attacked the enemy and behaved with valour, but met with the ill luck that usually marred his career. Brisighella's Italian infantry fought like heroes, six thousand of them maintaining the struggle until the last man was cut down. Twenty pieces of artillery were lost; and D'Alviano himself was wounded and taken prisoner. His army was completely routed; but a portion of the cavalry escaped, and the main body of the Venetian army under Pitigliano, having continued the march, took no part in the conflict. This battle, known as that of Vailà or Agnadello, was the first of the great and sanguinary struggles of which thenceforward Italy was to be unceasingly the scene, and in which the Italian soldiers and captains of either side fought with equal valour, binding their country more and more firmly in the bonds of foreign domination The French held Caravaggio, Bergamo, Brescia and Crema in their power; they also seized Peschiera, and thus within a fortnight Louis XII., who had entered Italy at the head of his army, was already lord of the territory promised to him at Cambray. Accordingly his ardour in the prosecution of the war soon began to relax. The Count of Pitigliano had shut himself up in Verona.

But meanwhile the Papal army, consisting of 400 men-at-arms, as many light horse, and 800 infantry, advanced rapidly into Romagna without encountering other obstacles Soon, too, it was further strengthened by 3000 Swiss, commanded by the Pope's nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, now Duke of Urbino in



CHAPTER XII.

The League of Cambray and the battle of Agnadello—The humiliation of Venice—A Legation to Mantua—"The second Decennale"—Machiavelli's small vexations—The Pope as the ally of Venice and enemy of France—Renewal of the war—Third Legation to France.

(1508–1510.)



HE 10th of December, 1508, had witnessed the conclusion of the League of Cambray, that Julius II. had so carefully planned and so ardently promoted The Emperor, Spain, France, and the Pope had united, apparently, to combat the Turks, but really to gratify their revenge by the destruction of Venice, and were already agreed as to the division of the territory The Pope was to receive the coveted lands of Romagna ; the Emperor, Padua, Vicenza, Verona and Friuli ; Spain, the Neapolitan territory on the Adriatic ; and France, who had to bear the brunt of the war, Bergamo, Brescia, Crema, Cremona, Ghiara d'Adda and the Milanese States. Hostilities immediately began, and from the beginning it seemed as though both nature and mankind had conspired to the injury of Venice. The powder magazine exploded ; a thunderbolt struck the fortress of Brescia ; a boat carrying 10,000 ducats to Ravenna was wrecked ; certain of the Orsini and the Colonna, who had engaged in the Venetian service and pledged themselves to bring a considerable force of foot soldiers and cavalry, kept the instalment of 15,000 ducats they had already received, and then broke the contract by order of the Pope. But the indomitable Republic remained undismayed, and despatched a powerful army of native and foreign

thing to behold the Venetian orators bent to the earth, so was their pride sunk in humiliation."[1]

In fact, the Pope, too, had changed his designs. Now that he held the lands of Romagna, although he still made a show of great anger, and demanded from the Venetians repayment of the revenues drawn by them in past years, yet it was easy to see that his wrath was beginning to be turned against the French, whom he hated, as he hated all foreigners in general. For they, having gained all they desired for themselves, no longer showed any intention of prosecuting the war. He was already thinking of joining Maximilian against France; but the Emperor, although now provided with funds, and although many imperial States had declared themselves ready to make their submission, still delayed crossing the frontiers of Italy. All these things might change the face of events at any moment. In fact, the Bishop of Trent formally took possession of Verona and Vicenza, and Padua also surrendered without striking a blow; but at Treviso matters went differently. The nobles there, as in all the cities under Venetian sway, were most hostile to the Republic, and proposed immediate surrender to the Emperor's representatives; but the people, who both at Treviso and elsewhere always sided with Venice, rose in revolt, and with cries of *Viva San Marco*, sacked the houses of the nobility and expelled the Imperial envoys.[2] Venice, being in no condition to defend her subjects, and seeing that although the nobles inclined to the foreigner, the populace flew to arms to maintain their union with the Republic, chose this moment for decreeing that the latter should be allowed to defend themselves, by releasing them from their oath of obedience. It has been much disputed whether this conduct was the result of deep policy or of pusillanimity, and the historian Romanin positively denied the fact, on the strength of having found no document confirmatory of the decree.[3] But without the issue of any positive decree, this resolve may have been the natural and inevitable result of the impotence to which Venice was then reduced; and the energetic defence maintained by the inhabitants of her cities would in this case serve to prove, not the depth of her policy, but the greatness of the affection with which she had inspired her subjects.

This affection, of which surer proofs were daily given, and the increasing discord among the leagued powers, at last restored the

[1] See the letter of the Ambassador dei Pazzi quoted above, and published at the end of Signor Saltini's article on "Antonio Giustinian," &c.

[2] Sismondi, "Hist. des Répub. Italiennes," vol. vii ch vii.

[3] Romanin, "Storia documentata di Venezia," vol. v. bk. xiii. ch. iii. p. 217.

virtue of his adoption by the deceased Duke Guidobaldo. When the tidings of the battle of Vailà reached the Duke Alfonso d'Este, he threw aside his neutrality, drove the Venetian Visdomino from Ferrara, sent thirty-two of his celebrated guns to the Pope's army, and repossessed himself of certain lands formerly taken from the Este by the Venetians. The Marquis of Mantua behaved much in the same manner. In expectation of the Emperor's arrival, the imperial feudatories in Friuli and Istria made attacks on the humbled Republic of St. Mark, whose only hope now lay in sowing dissension among her adversaries by yielding to a few of them the full extent of their demands.

There was no longer anything more to be given up to France, since she had already seized all that she desired ; so the Venetians restored to Spain the small Neapolitan territory held by them on the Adriatic. But that was a very trifling matter under present circumstances. They sent Antonio Giustinian as ambassador to the Emperor with *carte blanche* to give up all that should be required of them. And Giustinian, who had always proved himself an influential and haughty diplomat, prepared a Latin speech, so humble in tone, that it may be called positively cowardly ; and for this reason Venetian writers have sought to deny its authenticity.[1] But the discourse did not serve its purpose, for Giustinian could not even obtain audience, the Emperor having declared that he must first come to an agreement with France. On the other hand, Venice succeeded in her negotiations where she least expected to do so, namely, in Rome. Thence the Florentine Ambassador wrote that "it was a miserable

[1] "This oration Ad divinum Maximilianum Romanorum Imperatorem," translated by Guicciardini in his "Storia d' Italia," was thought by many, down to our own day, to be an invention of the enemies of Venice. But as we have elsewhere stated, Ricci had discovered an old copy of it among the "Carte del Machiavelli," where it is still preserved (case vi. No 53), and transcribed it in his "Priorista," stating that it had not been written to calumniate the Venetians as they had asserted, but was really the composition of Giustinian. Machiavelli alludes in his "Discorsi" (bk. iii. ch. xxxi) to the deep abasement of the Venetians, "who sent ambassadors to the Emperor to declare themselves his tributaries, and wrote letters full of cowardice to the Pope" Signor Saltini, of the Florence Archives, recently discovered another old copy of this same oration of Giustinian, sent to the Signoria by Messer Piero dei Pazzi, Florentine Ambassador at Rome, together with his letter of the 7th July, 1509, in which he said : To give a proof of the humiliation to which the Venetians are reduced, I send "the enclosed oration which they have published here as having been pronounced *coram Imperatore*" See "Antonio Giustinian e i suoi dispacci di Roma," in the "Archivio Storico," series iii, vol xxvi issue iv. 1877, p 72 and fol See also Preface to the "Dispacci di A Giustinian," edited by P. Villari, 3 vols. Florence, Le Monnier, 1876.

because the Emperor "very often undid in the evening that which he had done in the morning."[1] So the ambassadors hastened to sign a treaty (24th of October, 1509), by which the Florentines bound themselves to pay 40,000 ducats to Maximilian, who promised them in return his friendship and protection.[2] The gist of the matter, however, was that they were to pay, and the payment was to be made in four instalments: the first at once in the present month of October, the second by the 15th of November,[3] the third in January, and the fourth in February of the following year.

A decree of the 10th of November nominated Machiavelli bearer of the second instalment, with instructions to be at Mantua by the 15th, and after delivery of the money to go on to Verona, or wherever he thought best to obtain intelligence And Machiavelli fulfilled his mission, and immediately began to seek for news in Mantua, not omitting the remark that that was "the place where lies are born, and even rained down; and that the Court was fuller of them than the public streets"[4] On the 22nd he was at Verona, and wrote thence on the 26th, instantly grasping, in his usual way, the essential facts required to form a just idea of the state of things there and of public opinion. "The nobles," he wrote, "do not love Venice, and incline to the allies; but the people —the populace, and the country folk—are all *Marcheschi*.[5] The Bishop of Trent is at Verona with a few thousand foot and horse; Vicenza has already rebelled and given herself to the Venetians; the Emperor is at Roveredo and will not receive ambassadors; the Veronese nobles look to France, who in the end has only sent 200 Gascons and 200 men-at-arms. But these reinforcements are of no use, for they are too scanty; and meanwhile the allies devastate and pillage the country in a way that cannot be described." "And thus so great a desire of death or vengeance has entered into the souls of these country folk, that they are become more hardened and enraged against the enemies of the Venetians, than were the Jews against the Romans; and it daily happens that some one of them, being taken prisoner, submits to death rather than deny the name of Venice. Only yester-evening

[1] "Discorso sopra le cose di Almagna e sopra l'Imperatore," to which we have already made allusion It consists of two pages only. "Opere," vol. iv. p. 174.

[2] Nardi, "Storia Fiorentina," vol i pp. 419, 420 Signor Gaspar Amico, in his book upon Machiavelli (p 326, note 2), quotes the original treaty, which is in the Florence Archives, parchment, 24th of October, 1509

[3] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 144, says "25th of November;" but in Machiavelli's commission we find the words "not later than the 15th."

[4] Letter of the 20th of November, from Mantua. "Opere," vol. vii. p. 297.

[5] That is: *faithful to Saint Mark.*

courage of the Venetians. On the 17th of July, 1509, they entered Padua by surprise, and during the seizure of the city and surrender of the fortress, the peasants plundered the dwellings of the nobility. The whole of the Paduan territory followed the city's example; and Verona, occupied by the Bishop of Trent with very scanty forces, was on the point of doing the same, especially when, after having begged of the Imperials the help of the Marquis of Mantua, this general was captured on the road by the Stradiotes of Venice Meanwhile, Louis XII., instead of recommencing the war to assist his allies, was on his way back to France, leaving La Palisse on the Veronese boundaries with 500 lances and 200 noblemen. And this was after having concluded with the Pope a treaty of mutual defence for their own States, by which he left the vassals of the Church to their fate; and the chief of these, his whilom ally, the Duke of Ferrara, was now exposed to the full brunt of the attacks of Julius II.

At last, however, Maximilian decided upon action, and came to the siege of Padua, which town the Venetians had garrisoned with all their available forces. The two sons of the Doge Loredano brought a body of infantry at their own expense to share in the defence. They were followed by 176 other gentlemen of Venice; and all the country folk hurried within the walls, bringing their crops with them. The Emperor led the most powerful army that had been seen in Italy for many centuries. There were the French troops of La Palisse, Spaniards trained to arms under Gonsalvo de Cordova, Italians, Germans, adventurers of all nations, and two hundred guns. In all it comprised from eighty to one hundred thousand men.[1] Siege operations were quickly begun and a breach was made; but when the army tried to storm the walls, the Venetians fired the mines they had laid, and the greater part of the assailants, including several leaders of renown, were hurled into the air. Accordingly, on the 3rd of October, the siege was raised Then fresh quarrels arose among the allies, especially on the part of the Emperor, who having exhausted his exchequer begged money from all, and more pressingly than ever from the Florentines. He reminded them of the sums they had authorized Vettori to promise him, as soon as he came to Italy, where he now was.

The Florentines were obliged to despatch two ambassadors to meet him at Verona, Giovan Vittorio Soderini and Piero Guicciardini, the historian's father. Machiavelli called their attention to what he had already written upon Germany and the Emperor, and advised them to keep their wits about them,

[1] Sismondi, "Hist. des Répub. Italiennes," vol. vii. ch. viii.

two months, Machiavelli had little to do, and seems to have turned his spare time to account by beginning the second of his Decennials, that he afterwards left unfinished. In fact, the fragment of it remaining to us, treats of events happening between 1504 and 1509. And in a letter he wrote to Luigi Guicciardini during these days, and of which we shall have more to say presently, we find a postscript saying: "I expect Gualtieri's reply to my *cantafavola*" Now this was the title frequently applied both by himself and his friends to "The First Decennial."

Machiavelli begins the second by announcing that he shall venture to relate recent events, although

"Sia per dolor divenuto smarrito." [1]

After invoking the Muse, he alludes to the rout of Bartolommeo d'Alviano in Tuscany, accomplished chiefly by means of the valiant Antonio Giacomini, whom he highly eulogizes. After still briefer notice of a few general events in Europe, he recalls how Pope Julius II., not being able "to restrain his ferocious soul," began the war against the tyrants of Perugia and Bologna. Thus at last he speedily arrives at the League of Cambrav. This he seems to attribute chiefly to the victories of the Venetians over the Emperor in 1508, and to their having then deprived him of certain States:

"Le qual di poi si furon quel pasto,
Quel rio boccon, quel venenoso cibo,
Che di San Marco ha lo stomaco guasto" [2]

Then the Florentines, turning the opportunity to account, starved Pisa into submission, by compassing her about in such fashion that none could enter "without wings;" so that although her obstinacy had long endured,

"Tornò piangendo alla catena antica" [3]

But nothing could be concluded without first satisfying the covetous desires of the potentates, who continually found new pretexts for obtaining money.

"Bisognò a ciascuno empier la gola
E quella bocca che teneva aperta." [4]

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[1] "Although his brain be bewildered by grief."

[2] "Who later became that fare, that fatal mouthful, that poisonous cheer, that has disordered the stomach of St. Mark."

[3] "Weeping took up her former chain."

[4] "It behoved us to fill the maw of every one,
And their ever gaping mouths."

there was one brought before this Bishop, who said that he was a St. Markite[1] and would die a St. Markite, and otherwise would not live; therefore the Bishop had him hung, for neither the promise of his life, nor of other advantage, could turn him from this opinion: therefore, all things considered, it is impossible for those monarchs to hold these lands so long as the peasants have breath."[2] The energetic and sometimes heroic resistance of these peasants recalls the very similar resistance made by the Pisan peasantry, and is another proof of the vigour and energy still existing in the lower ranks of Italian society, to whom recourse was seldom made, and to whom historians have accorded scanty attention.

Machiavelli's letters proceeded to say that "things cannot long go on in this fashion. The more slowly the war proceeds, the more will the love for the Venetians increase, since the inhabitants both within and without the walls are eaten up by the allies, who rob and pillage them, whereas the Venetians, although making continual skirmishes and raids, yet respect their property and cause them to be treated with the utmost consideration.[3] Meanwhile Louis XII. and Maximilian are by no means in accord, and it is feared that in the end the latter will join the Venetians. Of these two sovereigns the one can make war, but will not, and therefore lets things drag on; the other wants to make war but cannot. If, however, in this fashion they nourish the desperation of the peasantry and the existence of the Venetians, it is believed, as I have before said, that from one moment to another something may happen to make Monarchs, Popes and every one else repent not having done their duty in due time.[4] In all these places which the Venetians take possession of, they have a St. Mark painted, grasping a sword instead of a book; therefore it would seem that they have discovered to their cost that to keep their States neither studies nor books are sufficient."[5]

On the 12th of December Machiavelli was at Mantua, whence, the war about Verona being already near, he sent a long and minute description of the latter city;[6] and shortly after, having received permission from the Ten, returned to Florence.

During this short journey, which lasted nevertheless almost

[1] That is: *faithful to Saint Mark.*
[2] Letter of the 26th of November.
[3] Letter of the 29th of November.
[4] Letter of the 1st of December.
[5] Letter of the 7th of December.
[6] He repeated this description with some merely stylistic variations in bk. v. of his "Istorie Fiorentine" ("Opere," vol. ii p. 45), as Ranke has already observed in his "Geschichte der romanischen und germanischen Volker von" 1494 *bis* 1514—zweite Auflage. Leipzig, 1874. See page *153 of the second part of the volume, entitled: "Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber."

Now the hastiest perusal of this anecdote, which it would be preferable to entirely ignore, clearly shows that in order to excite his friend's laughter, Machiavelli indulged in more than his usual exaggeration, and went considerably beyond the bounds of probability. Such exaggeration makes us deplore that a man no longer in his youth, father of a family and husband of an affectionate wife, could even jestingly dip his pen in such rank impurity.[1] Neither is he sufficiently justified by the usual excuse of the temper of the times. Fortunately, he afterwards had too much important business on his hands to find leisure for imagining or writing other indecencies of the kind.

His friends often emulated him in the most unseemly discourses, but at this period their correspondence from Florence treated solely of his domestic affairs and complications. His kinsman, Francesco del Nero, wrote to him at length on the 22nd of November, of a family quarrel. He did not enter into particulars, but it seems to have been an affair of some consequence, as many weighty personages were quoted and consulted on the subject; among others the Gonfaloniere Soderini and his brothers, who showed themselves interested in Machiavelli's favour.[2] Soon after, on the 28th of December, another and still more serious communication reached him from his faithful friend Biagio Buonaccorsi. "A week ago," he wrote, "a certain person introduced himself masked,[3] and with a couple of witnesses, to the notary of the Conservators, protesting that you, as the son of a father who, &c.,[4] are not qualified for the post of Secretary. And although the law, frequently before quoted, is entirely in your favour, yet many make a great noise about it, and it is spoken of in all quarters, even in the houses of ill-fame." This letter, after advising him, in the name of his friends, to keep out of Florence for the present, says in conclusion: "I make entreaties and return thanks for you here, things that you are not adapted to do for yourself. So it is better for you to let pass this storm, which has kept me sleepless for days, not neglecting anything that could be done for you, since, though I do not know why it should be so, there are very few here disposed to help you."[5]

[1] The original of this letter, of which a few eccentric persons had made copies, is in the Florence Archives, "Carte Strozziane," file 139, sheet 216. Parts of it were given, with many errors of the press, at p. 1142 of the edition of Machiavelli's works in one vol. published by Usigli, Florence, 1857.

[2] "Carte del Machiavelli," case iv. No. 55. Appendix (II.), doc. vii. of Italian edition.

[3] The original says *turato*, *i.e.*, with his face hidden.

[4] The original letter leaves the sentence unfinished in this way.

[5] This letter, included in the "Carte del Machiavelli," was published by Passerini in the "Opere" (P.M.), vol. i. p. 74.

Afterwards the allies weakened the power of Venice at Vailà, and then it was clearly seen how little avails force without the prudence that discerns and provides for evils beforehand.

> "Di quinci nasce che 'l voltar del cielo
> Da quello a questo i vostri Stati volta
> Più spesso che non muta il caldo il gelo.
> Che se la vostra prudenzia fusse volta
> A conoscere il male e rimediarvi,
> Tanta potenzia al ciel sarebbe tolta."[1]

And after these verses, which, though certainly neither elegant nor harmonious, attest the unbounded faith he always placed in political craft, and the art of government, that in his opinion could never miss success, he comes to the moment when Maximilian having failed in the assault of Padua,

> "Levò le genti, affaticato e stanco:
> E dalla Lega sendo derelitto,
> Di ritornarsi nella Magna vago,
> Perdè Vicenza per maggior despitto."[2]

And with this event, which occurred at the time that Machiavelli was at Verona and Mantua, "The Second Decennial" comes to a stop. It is a short fragment and even less valuable than the first.

The letter dated 8th of December, from Machiavelli in Verona to Luigi Guicciardini in Mantua, to which we have already alluded, shows that he did not dedicate all his leisure to writing very indifferent verse. It would seem that Guicciardini, brother to the historian, had sent him an account of an indecent adventure that had happened to him; and the Secretary, in return, related another of so revolting a nature, that we should not notice it at all, were it not that the letter containing it having been printed almost *in extenso*, it is necessary to say a few words about it. He relates, then, how once at Verona he found himself in the squalid abode of a woman of evil fame. She was so horribly dirty, ugly, and foul, that when, in going away, the light of a lantern enabled him to see her clearly, he was so disgusted at having approached her as to be seized with a fit of vomiting.

[1] "Hence it comes that the face of Heaven is turned from this to that of your States, more often than the heat and frost return. For if your prudence were directed to knowing the evil and remedying it, much power would be taken from Heaven."

[2] "Weary and tired he withdrew his men; and being forsaken by the League, and yearning to return to Germany, to his greater despite he lost Vicenza." "Decennale Secondo," in the "Opere," vol. v. pp. 374-80.

the Secretary's enemies, whose number was much increased by envy of his good fortune, should seize the occasion as a pretext for annoying him. But whether he had already started before Buonaccorsi's letter came, or whether, assured of the Gonfalonier's good will and the law's favour, he did not attach much importance to his friend's fears, it is certain that on the 2nd of January he was already in Florence, engaged in the usual affairs of his office.[1] By the 13th of March he was at San Savino, settling a question of boundaries between the Siennese and Florentines;[2] in May we find him in the Val di Nievole reviewing the battalions, and also continually occupied with the organization of the militia in Florence.[3]

Meanwhile the Venetians, who had entered Vicenza, arrived too late at Verona, where the Imperial forces were already entrenched. They captured several places in Friuli and the Polesine; but their fleet, which had been sent up the Po to take Ferrara by assault, was defeated and almost destroyed owing to the cowardice and inexperience of its commander, Angelo Trevisan. Soon after, namely at the beginning of 1510, the Count of Pitigliano died; and thus, Alviano having been taken prisoner, the Venetians had no commanders for their army, and could find none better than Giovan Paolo Baglioni of Perugia. But at this moment help reached them from a most unexpected quarter.

The Pope's jealousy of France was daily increasing. He had summoned a host of foreigners into Italy in order to combat Venice. But now that Venice had humbled herself at his feet, yielding to him in all things, he not only showed a disposition to leniency, but had granted her absolution, and, as the Venetian ambassador to Rome said in his Report, had actually said "that if there were no such State" (as Venice) "it would be necessary to create one."[4] And even at this moment he began to raise his well-known cry of *Fuori i barbari.* The Florentine Orator in France, Messer Alessandro Nasi, who for some time had reported, in speaking of the Pope and the King, how it was his belief "that there was no small suspicion between them, and little good faith," now began to write that the anger of the French had become very

[1] On the 28th of February, 1509-10, he received 54 gold florins, as payment at the rate of one florin a day, above his regular salary "for the 54 days, beginning from the 10th of November and ending with the second day of the last month of January, when he returned to Florence" ("Opere," P. M., vol. i. p. 83).

[2] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. 75, note 27.

[3] Ibid., note 28.

[4] "Sommario della Relazione di Roma," of Domenico Trevisan, 1st of April, 1510, in Albèri's "Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti," series II, vol. iii. p. 36.

It is difficult to guess the exact point of this long discourse. It may have been a question of taxes or debts to the State left unpaid by Machiavelli's father, who may thus have incurred prohibition from holding any public office, a prohibition that the malevolent were perhaps desirous to enforce in his son's case.[1] This is a mere hypothesis, but it is supported to some extent, not only by the circumstance of the quarrel spoken of in Francesco del Nero's letter quoted above; but also by the fact, that in June, 1508, according to an arrangement with his brother Totto, Niccolò Machiavelli had assumed possession of the whole paternal inheritance, together with the considerable debts and obligations by which it was burdened. In 1511 the officials of the Monte, or Exchequer, regularly debited him with the due amount of tithes, and he was afterwards obliged to pay large sums to the creditors.[2] It is not surprising that disputes and quarrels should have arisen under these circumstances, and it was also perfectly natural that

[1] It was not unusual in Florence to make sons suffer penalties to which their fathers had been sentenced. About the same period, Filippo Strozzi, as we shall see later, incurred punishment for having married the daughter of Piero dei Medici, who was a rebel. And in his "Storia Fiorentina," p. 377, Guicciardini observes that another question was raised on the same count: namely, whether as Piero had attempted to enter the city by force, "and by virtue of one of our statutes had incurred the punishment of a rebel, both in his own person and that of his descendants, Filippo Strozzi should not be punished. not only for having married a rebel's daughter, but for having married a rebel." Passerini, in editing Buonaccorsi's letter, above quoted, says in a note to the words, *per essere voi nato di padre*, &c, "Bernardo, father of our Niccolò, was an illegitimate child." But, as usual, he has no proofs to give of this assertion, which seems to us entirely unfounded, judging from the ancient "Records" of the Machiavelli family in the Marucelliana Library. These "Records," quoted at the beginning of this work, show us that Bernardo inherited as a legitimate son, and that the illegitimate children are mentioned apart. Neither Ricci in his "Priorista," nor any other author, ever alleged this charge of bastardy. Besides, to the best of our knowledge, neither Florentine statutes nor Florentine historians assert that the legitimate son of a father of illegitimate birth would be disqualified from filling the modest post of Secretary. It was barely forbidden to natural sons to be elected to the highest offices of the State: to the Gonfaloniership or the Signoria.

[2] See the two documents published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. pp. 58 and 59. From these we learn that, on the 21st of June, 1508, a compact had been arranged by arbitration, between Niccolò Machiavelli and his brother Totto, and in consequence the paternal estate, formerly divided between the two, all passed over to Niccolò with its accompanying charges and taxes. On the 15th of April, 1511, the officials of the Monte "deliberaverunt quod onus X.° (Decimæ) domini Bernardi de Machiavellis . . . describatur et ponatur poste domini Nicolai domini Bernardi de Machiavellis, et quod dictus Nicolaus gaudeat beneficio dello sgravo delle bocche, com'era sotto la posta di M. Bernardo suo padre, et in effecto cancellinla da conto di decto M. Bernardo, e ponghinla alla posta di Niccolo suo figliuolo, sanza alcuno loro prejudicio." "The same property," observes Passerini, "was registered in the name of the children of Niccolò Machiavelli in 1534, which was the first *catasto* (or census) made after this one."

accompany to Rome with 2,500 lances and 30,000 foot soldiers; and he has sworn upon his soul that he will accomplish one of these two things: either to lose his kingdom, or crown the Emperor and make a Pope after his own fashion.[1]

Then on the 9th of August he related how, having gone with Rubertet to see the King, and having conversed with him on Italian matters in general, he had perceived that the French felt no confidence in the Florentines, excepting when they saw them with weapons in their hands; and indeed trusted them the less because of the belief in Florentine prudence. He added in conclusion: "Your Excellencies may believe, as they believe the Gospel, that should there be war between the Pope and this sovereign, you will not be able to avoid declaring for one side or the other. And therefore it is judged by all who wish you well, to be necessary for your Excellencies to consider the matter and decide, without waiting for the crisis to come upon you, and be pressed by necessity. The Italians who are here believe that it were best to seek peace; but that if it cannot be obtained, the King should be shown that to keep a Pope in check, neither many emperors nor much noise may be needed. And discoursing with Rubertet on this matter, I showed him all the knotty points of the question, and how, if they make war alone, they know what they bring upon themselves; but that if they engage in it with allies, they will have to share Italy with them, and therefore be involved in a greater and more dangerous war among themselves Nor would it be a desperate enterprise to impress these knotty points on their minds, if there were more than one influential Italian here who would take the trouble to try."[2]

The King had decreed a Council at Orleans, to see if he could overthrow the authority of the Pope and create another. The which thing, observes Machiavelli, "if your Excellencies were elsewhere, might be desirable, so that even these priests might have some bitter mouthfuls to swallow in this world."[3] But things did not turn in that direction; and meanwhile the probability of war increased, and the French insisted more than ever on the Florentines taking arms without delay. Machiavelli held a long discourse with Rubertet on the matter, to make him understand that the Florentines having exhausted their resources, and being surrounded on every side by the States of the Pope or of the Pope's friends, might be immediately attacked from various quarters; and that in such case the King, instead of receiving

[1] Letter of the 3rd of August, from Blois.
[2] Letter of the 9th of August, from Blois.
[3] Letter of the 18th of August, from Blois.

vehement.[1] But even for Louis XII. it was no slight affair to be at war with the Pope, especially with a Pope of the temper of Julius II., who, in the words of the ambassador Trevisan, "wished to be lord and master of the game of the whole world."[2] In addition to this there was the circumstance, that the Swiss, esteemed by far the best infantry in the world, and always needed by France, now claimed such exorbitant terms that the King was enraged, and obliged to content himself with making some separate arrangement with the men of the Valais and the Grisons And meanwhile Cardinal Mathias Schinner, Bishop of Sitten, or Sion, gained their ear and went about among them offering money for the hire of troops in the Pope's service.

Soon the war broke out again, although languidly, between the French and the Emperor on the one side, and the Venetians and the Pope on the other. The Venetians with their feeble army, commanded by a leader of so little note as Baglioni, would have been in no condition to oppose the enemies' united forces; but the Emperor continued undecided, and in France, on the 25th of May, 1510, occurred the death of the Cardinal d'Amboise, who had been the instigator and guide of Louis XII.'s policy. This monarch now left his affairs in the hands of Rubertet, or else, which was worse, tried to act on his own impulses; wherefore all men looked forward to evil days. Chaumont, who owed his elevation to being the nephew and tool of the deceased Cardinal, immediately received orders to retreat upon Milan, leaving the Emperor 400 lances and 1,500 Spanish foot soldiers[3] And another cause of all this was, that the Pope's influence was beginning to be felt in France. To the clergy, and to the whole country, it seemed a serious matter to be at war with the Head of the Church. Nor did the latter suffer the grass to grow beneath his feet, but was already trying to excite Genoa to revolt, to which end Marcantonio Colonna had, under false pretences, left the service of the Florentines and marched thither with 100 men-at-arms and 700 foot soldiers[4] A great deal was said at the time about this mysterious attempt; for at first no one understood the purport of

[1] See Nasi's Legation in Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. ii.

[2] "Sommario della Relazione di Roma," before quoted.

[3] Sismondi, "Histoire des Républiques Italiennes," vol. vii ch. viii.

[4] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 148, says 700 men-at-arms and 700 foot soldiers; but several private letters give other figures, and 700 men-at-arms seems an improbable number. *Vide* Appendix II., of Italian edition, in document viii, a few letters written by friends of Machiavelli, showing that this Colonna affair long remained a mystery for the Florentines and caused them much annoyance. It also brought on them the unjust reproofs of France, who either suspected, or feigned suspicion, of their good faith in the matter.

ing; whether the King had the right to make war in return for his own defence; whether one who had purchased the Papacy, and committed infinite scandals, could be deemed the true Pope.[1]

During his journey back to Italy, Machiavelli was obliged to make frequent halts, so that we only find him in Florence on the 19th October, and from the instalments by which his salary was paid to him, we learn that his absence had lasted 118 days[2] During this period he received, as usual, many letters from friends who kept him informed of Italian matters. Very few of these, however, were from the pen of his faithful friend Buonaccorsi, who at that time was distracted with grief owing to the long and serious illness of his wife. In fact, on the 22nd August, after excusing himself for his silence, he wrote in conclusion: "I have reached such a pitch, that I desire death rather than life, seeing no channel for health, should she be torn from me."[3]

[1] Letter of the 10th September.

[2] His stipend was of 10 lire a day, inclusive of his salary as chancellor, "which thus was given again when he was sent to the above place." This sum equalled that of 12 small lire, from which deduction was made of 2 lire, 4 soldi, and 11 denari for the ordinary salary he received in Florence. On the 12th November, having made up his accounts, there was found to be owing to him a total of 1416 small lire. He had already received 700 on account; his regular salary for those days amounted to 264 lire, 17 soldi, 2 denari; therefore he still had to receive 451 lire, 2 soldi, 10 denari, which were paid to him See the "Stanziamenti," published by Passerini, "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p 76

[3] "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No 23 These also comprise a few letters from Roberto Acciaiuoli to Machiavelli, after the latter's return to Florence, alluding to the merry life they were then leading. For Buonaccorsi's letter, see Appendix (II) of Italian edition, document xi. We do not know if his wife's illness ended fatally.

help from them, would have to send troops for their defence,[1] and simultaneously provide for the safety of Genoa, Ferrara, Friuli and Savoy.[2] And he so repeatedly insisted upon these points, even in the royal Council chamber, that at last Chaumont received orders to demand no armed assistance from Florence, but this did not prevent him from speedily returning to the subject, and with his accustomed insolence[3]

The King was now intent upon the idea of coming to Italy, and in thinking of the future neglected the present. At Ferrara and Modena things were going very badly with his friends. The Pope's army had entered Ferrarese territory, and Modena had opened its gates to Cardinal di Pavia Reggio was ready to do the same; half the Duchy of Ferrara would have been already invaded, if Chaumont had not despatched 200 lances, who were sufficient to arrest the course of events[4] This drew from Machiavelli the just remark, that everything might have been remedied, if thought of in time. But as we have seen, this great neglect of business was a consequence, foreseen by every one, of the death of Cardinal de Rohan. He had devoted attention to these small affairs, which were now conducted haphazard. "Thus," Machiavelli wrote, "while the King thinks of other things, and his people neglect him, the sick man is dying.[5] Nevertheless, all here are agreed that should he come to Italy, it will be necessary for him to increase your Excellencies' power. If he comes and you remain in your present condition, although you may have to support hard rubs and much expense, yet you may also hope for much benefit."[6]

Meanwhile the new ambassador, Roberto Acciaiuoli, was on the point of arrival, with more definite proposals, and Machiavelli, who as usual had no money, asked urgently for a remittance, and made preparations for departure[7] By the 10th of September he was already on the way, and wrote from Tours that great efforts were being made in France to assemble the Council, and that it was already settled on what points to ask its judgment. It was to be questioned as to whether the Pope had the right to make war upon the most Christian King, without either challenge or warn-

[1] Machiavelli continually received letters from the Ten, the Gonfalonier, and friends, treating of these dangers of the Republic. Many of these have been published, together with those of the third Legation to France, in the "Opere" (P. M), vol. vi. See also the Appendix (II.), document ix. of Ital ed.

[2] Letter of the 27th of August

[3] This is proved by other letters to Machiavelli, also published in the "Opere (P. M), vol. vi. See in the Appendix (II), document x. of Ital. ed.

[4] Sismondi, "Hist. des Répub. Ital," vol. vii. ch. ix p 318.

[5] Letter of the 2nd September. [6] Letter of the 5th September. [7] Ibid.

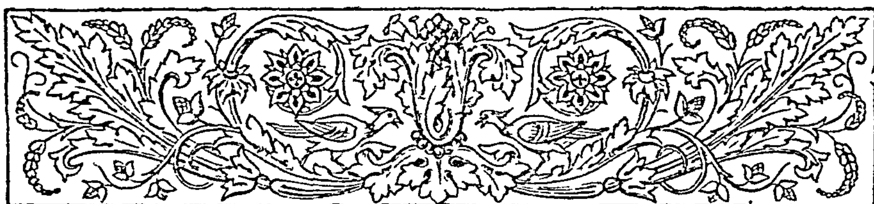
were visible even in the diminished authority of the magistrates, and the insecurity of the streets by night. The chronicler, Giovanni Cambi, adds, that licentiousness had increased, and that women of evil life had become so insolent that they defied the laws by lodging in all parts of the city and showing themselves everywhere. Also, by means of their adherents, they threatened personal injury even to the Eight of the Balia, who went about in fear of their lives[1]

But this was not the worst. The Medici party, favoured by the Pope, daily gained ground. During Piero's life, his coarse manners, dissipated conduct, vindictive and despotic character, and his repeated attempts to re-enter Florence by force of arms, had alienated men's minds from him and his family. But after his death by drowning in the Garigliano, towards the end of 1503, the aspect of things began to change. The headship of the family had now devolved on his brother, Cardinal Giovanni, who resided in Rome, and was of a very different disposition. Of cultivated and pleasant manners, he was always surrounded by artists and literary men, and in all things followed the old traditions of Cosimo and Lorenzo, of whom—both for good and for evil—he was the worthy descendant. He took the greatest care to maintain the semblance of a modest private citizen, showing himself free from all craving for rule in Florence. The experience of his forefathers had taught him that he too might more easily achieve power the better he preserved an appearance of shunning it. He was a ready and generous benefactor to all applicants ; so that he gradually came to be considered the natural representative of the Florentines in Rome. For he gave indiscriminate assistance to all who were there, making use of his influence in the Curia and the favour he enjoyed with the Pope, who was well pleased to witness the elevation of an adversary and rival to Soderini.[2]

In this way, although far off, the Cardinal was already recognized in Florence as the head of a party whose numbers were daily increased by all the malcontents and all the enemies of the Gonfalonier. And as soon as he felt his position sufficiently assured, the Cardinal began to lay aside his apparent reserve In 1508 one of the first signs of this was to be seen in his success in arranging the marriage of Filippo Strozzi with Clarice, daughter of Piero dei Medici. This alliance caused great excitement in

[1] Giov. Cambi, "Istorie," vol. ii. p 253 and fol. (In the "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani" di Frate Ildefonso, vol. xxi)

[2] All this is admirably analyzed and described by Guicciardini in his "Storia Fiorentina," ch. xxxii. ; and also in his "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. bk. x ch i. p. 27. The other historians and chroniclers of the time testify to the same effect.



CHAPTER XIII.

Soderini's enemies take heart—Cardinal dei Medici gains favour—Soderini renders an account of his administration—Conspiracy of Prinzivalle della Stufa—Taking of Mirandola—Council of Pisa—Mission to Pisa—Fourth Legation to France.

(1510–1511.)



NOW in 1510 it was clearly seen that storms were slowly but relentlessly gathering over the Florentine Republic The Pope, with irresistible pertinacity and ardour, laboured to isolate France by leaguing against her, with Spain and Venice, and possibly with the Emperor also. Events seemed to favour his efforts, and nothing worse could have befallen the Republic and the Gonfaloniere Soderini, whose policy had always been founded on the friendship of France, which he neither could nor would relinquish. Therefore Florence might be encompassed by foes at any moment. This critical state of things naturally swelled the ranks of Soderini's antagonists within the city. All those who were discontented with, or envious of him, joined to the no small number of those who always slide with the stream, daily drew farther away from him They had no accusations to bring against his political rectitude, or his excellent administration ; but they could now cry aloud the often-repeated complaint, that his government was too personal, in that he had excluded men of credit and influence for the sake of exalting others of low degree who were useful instruments in the execution of all that he and his secretary Machiavelli desired. This, they said, naturally weakened the government, and its effects

impartiality and his justice. He was so overcome by emotion that his eyes often filled with tears, especially when speaking of the unjust accusations urged against him, and of the threatened danger to liberty, which, as he said, it was sought to destroy under cover of hatred to himself.[1] The Council showed their resolve to maintain a free government, and proved it, not only by their reception of the Gonfalonier's speech, but also by voting a law for the defence of liberty, which he had many times brought forward and advocated, but never succeeded in carrying. This law[2] provided for the case of a sudden deficiency—from conspiracy or other unforeseen cause—of the legal number constituting one or more of the chief magistracies (Signory), Gonfaloniers of the Companies, and Worthies (Buoni Homini), and also provided against any tampering with the purses for the purpose of preventing the regular extraction of names, and then convoking a popular Parliament in order to upset the government. Should the purses be left intact, or at least the registers of the names preserved, the new law obliged those remaining in office to proceed at once to the work of election, by drawing the names. Should the purses have been destroyed or carried off with the registers, then the

[1] Cambi, "Istorie," vol ii. p 243 and fol. Ammirato faithfully follows Cambi. Guicciardini, in his "Storia d'Italia," at the end of ch iii. bk. ix. vol. vi p 202, alludes to the conspiracy, saying that "some infamy attached to the person of the Pontiff, as he had been aware that by means of Cardinal dei Medici, it had been arranged with Marcantonio Colonna and certain young Florentines, that the Gonfalonier, Piero Soderini, should be killed in Florence," &c.

[2] Cambi, "Istorie," vol. ii. p. 249 Ammirato, following Cambi, speaks of this law and repeats the same mistakes, among others that it abolished the Parliament, which had instead been abolished long before, namely, in the time of Savonarola The "Provvisione," dated 20th of January, 1510-11, is in the Florence Archives, "Consigli Maggiori, Provvisioni," reg. 201, sheet 41-43 Its preface, given below, clearly indicates how the mistake arose of the pretended abolition of Parliament in this year · "The magnificent and most excellent Signory desiring to establish and consolidate the present peaceful condition of the people, their lives and liberty, and provide that it should not be imperilled nor stained by any accident, however grave; and reflecting that if by any accident, ordinary or extraordinary, some one of the three chief offices and magistracies of our city might not be of the legal number, or might be so diminished as not to comprise a sufficient number, namely, the two-thirds, or that the purses of some members should be (by those who seek to do evil) either damaged, stolen, burnt, or hidden, so that the new names could not be drawn; thus all the actions of the present state and liberty would be suspended and cease; and as this would furnish a reason, not being otherwise possible to re-establish things, that a Parliament should be convoked, which, having to be done by force, would be done in favour of whomever should be most powerful, not of those desiring good and peaceful life; they therefore . . . provide and ordain," &c. The clauses of the Provvisioni also provide for the method of election to incomplete or omitted magistracies, and for the nomination of the substitutes, and the renewal of the purses, always by means of an extraordinary convocation of the Great Council.

Florence, because it was contrary to the laws affecting the children of rebels, and also because it was vigorously opposed by Soderini and his friends. Yet notwithstanding the clamour raised about it, Filippo Strozzi was let off with a fine of 500 gold crowns, besides being *ammonito* for five years, and banished for three to the kingdom of Naples.[1] This sentence was considered very mild, in a case of violation of the Statutes; and it was not apparently carried out in full, since we find Strozzi again in Florence before the three years had expired. The Medici party was stirring now, and becoming more and more audacious

This caused Soderini so much anxiety, that on the 22nd of December, 1510, he insisted on rendering to the Council an exact and minute account of his administration during his eight years of government, in which period the expenses had amounted to about 908,300 gold crowns. He delivered accounts of the savings made, of the sums expended; exhibited his books, and then deposited them in an iron box.[2] It was plain to all that the Republic had never enjoyed so regular and economical an administration. Yet directly afterwards a plot against the Gonfalonier's life was discovered, and it was rumoured that the Pope himself was implicated in it. On the 23rd of December, namely the day following that on which Soderini had publicly rendered up his accounts, a certain Prinzivalle della Stufa went to Filippo Strozzi with a proposal for murdering the Gonfalonier and overthrowing the government, and added that the Pope had approved of the design and promised the help of some of Marcantonio Colonna's men. Whether Strozzi was really, as he said, averse to mixing in affairs of State at that moment, or whether he had no confidence in the speaker, it is certain that he indignantly rejected Prinzivalle's proposal, and after allowing him time to escape, revealed the affair to the Gonfalonier. So all that could be done was to summon and interrogate the fugitive's father, bring him to trial, and exile him for five years.

Soderini was much disturbed by the matter, and on the evening of the 29th, when the Gonfaloniers of the Companies were to be nominated, he came before the Council and stated that the plot seemed to be widely spread in the city, and that a second attempt might easily be made His murder, he said, had been planned in order to immediately close the Council and change the government, by convoking the people in Parliament in defiance of the strictest prescriptions of the law. In the course of this speech he entered into many details; and again gave a long exposition of his political conduct, of his method of government, his

[1] Cambi, "Istorie," vol. ii. pp. 221-223. [2] Ibidem, pp 242, 243.

the French into Tuscany.[1] And Petrucci himself had besought the Pontiff's assistance, being in terror of the popular discontent, at that moment much increased in consequence of the unavoidable cession of Montepulciano.[2] On the 5th of May Machiavelli was again on the road, on a mission to Luciano Grimaldi, lord of Monaco, and returned thence on the 11th of June, after having concluded a treaty of friendly alliance and commerce for ten years.[3]

Meanwhile the Council of Tours gave Louis XII. the desired reply, namely, that he had complete right to make war on the Pope. The latter, however, without waiting for answer or counsel from any quarter, had already begun the war, and was carrying it on with the ardour of a youthful commander. On the 22nd of September, 1510, he had entered Bologna, with an Italian and Spanish army led by the Duke of Urbino and Marcantonio and Fabrizio Colonna, before Chaumont had time to oppose any resistance. Neither did the approach of winter check his progress, for, burning with wrath against the Duke of Ferrara, he pushed on and captured Concordia; then he attacked Mirandola, held by the widow of Luigi Pico, the faithful adherent of France who had only sent a feeble reinforcement to his aid. In the first days of 1511 the old Pope had himself carried in a litter from Bologna, and remained within gunshot during the assault. Snow was falling heavily, the rivers were frozen, and a cannon ball struck the quarters where he lodged. Another day, having gone a little distance from the camp, he nearly fell in with a French ambuscade, and would certainly have been captured had not the snow prevented his return at the appointed hour. Mirandola was valiantly defended by Alexander, the nephew of G. J Trivulzio; but as Chaumont, from jealousy, sent no help, and the enemy had opened a breach, it was at last obliged to capitulate on the 20th of January, 1511, and also to pay 6000 ducats for exemption from the sack and pillage promised by the Holy Father as a reward to his troops

So great, indeed, was the Pope's impatience, that instead of waiting to enter by the gate, he had himself drawn up through the breach in a wooden box, and gave possession of the State to

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol v bk. x ch 1 p 8

[2] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 162, copied by Nardi, vol 1 p 448; Sismondi, vol vii p 353; Ammirato, *ad annum*, Gaspare Amico, "Vita di N. Machiavelli," pp. 348–50.

[3] Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. vii p 391; "Opere" (P M), vol. i. pp 77–79; Gaspare Amico, at p 352, note 3, and at p 353, note 1, gives two documents relating to this mission, and, with the exception of orthographical errors they are faithful transcripts.

Great Council was to be assembled, and at its second meeting, the members present, no matter how few, were to instantly begin the election. As to the office of Gonfalonier, the only thing done was to reinforce the regulations previously passed on the 26th of August, 1502, when it was, as they said, declared perpetual, and the new method of electing the Gonfalonier minutely defined Yet all this signified nothing. However much the number of malcontents in Florence had increased, they were still in a minority that could not possibly succeed in overthrowing the government, so long as they had only their own resources to depend upon. The real danger to the Republic came from without, and there was no time to be lost. For this reason, it was Machiavelli's great object to place the Republic in a state of defence, and solely reliant on its own forces. More convinced than ever of the utility and efficaciousness of his militia infantry (*ordinanza a piedi*), he now laboured with great energy at the formation of a mounted militia, armed with crossbows, lances, or matchlocks. For the present he placed it on a temporary footing, almost as an experiment, in order later, after successful preliminary trials, to get a law passed for its permanent establishment, as had been already done in the case of the infantry ordinance

During the two last months of 1510 Machiavelli travelled through the Florentine dominions, for the purpose of enrolling light horse; he then went to Pisa and Arezzo, to visit the two fortresses and report upon their condition; in February, 1511, he was at Poggio Imperiale, to investigate the state of that place. In March we find him employed in the upper valley of the Arno and in Valdichiana, giving payment in advance to a hundred light cavalry, whom he brought to Florence in April; and in August he made another journey to engage a second troop of the same number.[1] In the interval between these tours he had gone twice to Sienna, first to repudiate a continuation of the truce expiring in 1511,[2] and the second time to confirm it by another truce for twenty-five years, stipulating, however, on the one hand for the surrender of Montepulciano to the Florentines, and on the other, offering pledges that Florence would support the sovereignty of Petrucci in Sienna. This treaty, officially proclaimed at Sienna in August, was concluded through the mediation of the Pope, who wished to prevent the Florentines from proceeding to summon

[1] "Opere" (P. M), vol. i. pp 77-79. For these journeys he received nothing but his travelling expenses.

[2] Sienna Archives, "Deliberazioni della Balìa," vol. lii, 2nd of December, 1510: "Messer Niccolò Machiavelli, the Florentine envoy, arrived, and after presenting his credentials, repudiated, in the name of the Florentines, the truce described in the book of treaties between the Florentines and Siennese."

The Pope was at Ravenna when he received news of all these events. Although the public voice hurled accusations of treason against the Cardinal—who certainly had neither made due resistance, nor sent any warning to the Duke of Urbino—yet it was against the latter that Julius II. turned his rage, exclaiming, If he fall into my hands I will have him quartered.[1] Encouraged by this, the Cardinal came to Ravenna, and kneeling at the Pope's feet, did not content himself with obtaining pardon, but tried to cast all the blame upon the Duke. Urbino was only twenty-one years of age, but was already stained with crime, and now the Pope's anger, the dishonour of defeat, and the Cardinal's conduct, stirred him to such fury that, chancing to meet this prelate in the streets of Ravenna, he killed him with his own hands, splitting his skull with blows of his staff. Paride dei Grassi—the continuer of Burchard's Diary—hated the Cardinal, and believing him a traitor, approved of this murder, exclaiming: Oh, good God, how just are Thy judgments! We must render thanks to Thee for the death of the traitor; since, although he was killed by the hand of man, yet it was Thy work, or, at least, approved by Thee, without whose consent no leaf may fall to the ground.[2] But the Pope was inexpressibly grieved at so horrible a crime, committed by his own nephew against a Cardinal whom he dearly loved and cherished.[3] He threatened to make an

Cardinal was in league with the enemy, but this is not stated by the other historians Paridis Crassi, "Diarium Pontificatus Julii II," vol ii., at sheet 146*t* (Florence National Library, MSS Magliab ii 11, 145). Farther on, at sheet 147, it is said that the more faithful citizens wished to defend the gates of Bologna, and hastened to him · "sed is qui ad malum natus est, et qui populum et civitatem ac pontificio honorem barbaris vendere statuit, blande respondit · non timendum esse, quoniam optime rebus omnibus et saluti omnium consuluisset. Itaque, cum alii ad eum confugerent hoc idem annuntiantes, ipse Judas proditor, simulato habitu, cum suis satellitibus fere centum aufugit ex palatio"

[1] "Si in manus meus veniet dux nepos meus, quadripartitum eum faciam ex merito suo" But when he was told of the loss of the city and the Legate's crime, he announced these things to the Cardinals in very few words "Uno verbo captam esse Bononiam ab hostibus indicat, non tamen legatum dixit in hoc peccasse" ("Diarium" *cit*, at sheet 147*t*)

[2] "Bone Deus quam justa sunt judicia tua, unde tibi omnes gratias agimus, quod de proditore perfido dignas predictionis suæ poenas sumpsisti, et licet homo hoc fecerit supplicium, tamen a te sine quo nec folia in arbore movetur commissum aut saltem permissum credimus, ideoque gratias rursus tibi agimus" ("Diarium" *cit*, at sheet 148*t*) The skull of Cardinal Alidosi is still preserved at Ravenna Besides the authors quoted above, see also Reumont, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. iii. part ii p 40 and fol; Brosch, "Papst Julius II.," p. 222 and fol.

[3] It is very difficult to find fitting words in which to hint at the rumours then afloat, and openly mentioned, concerning the relations of the Pope with the Cardinal. They merely testify to the corruption of the times, and the very bad

Giovanni Pico, cousin of the deceased lord, and who had always been the enemy of France.

For the French, the death of their general Chaumont, on the 11th of February, was a fortunate event. He had allowed Modena to be seized by the enemy, had failed to reach Bologna in time, had sent no succour to Mirandola, and thus all things had been ruined by his fault. Now that he no longer enjoyed his uncle's most efficacious protection, he could not hope for the same indulgence as before, and therefore adversity drove him to such despair that he died of grief. The command of the army was then once more entrusted to the veteran G. J. Trivulzio and the young leader Gaston de Foix, who was destined to do great deeds during the few months of life still remaining to him. In fact, the fortunes of the war speedily changed. In May, G. J. Trivulzio brought his army close to Bologna, and the Pope, who had previously rejected the offers of peace proposed by the Congress at Mantua, and even urged by the Emperor, now fled almost in a panic to Ravenna, hoping that the Bolognese would undertake the defence of their city. He had left there the Cardinal Francesco Alidosi, formerly bishop of Pavia, as Legate of Romagna; and the Duke of Urbino and his army were not far off. The Cardinal, in great favour with the Pope (a point that gave rise to strangely indecent rumours), was, however, much detested, and considered as a man in whom little confidence could be placed.[1]

The moment it was known that Trivulzio was approaching the city with the Bentivoglio, the Bolognese rose to arms; on the 21st of May they threw down Michel Angelo's statue of Julius II. and shattered it to fragments, which were afterwards carried off and converted into a cannon by the Duke of Ferrara. The Cardinal immediately fled to Castel del Rio; the Bentivoglio and the French entered the city; the Duke of Urbino, surprised by the sudden revolt, and hard pressed by the French, made so hasty and disorderly a retreat, that he lost all his artillery and baggage This the enemy carried away in donkey loads, and for that reason the fight was called the day of the Donkey-drivers.[2] Mirandola again changed its master, and the Duke of Ferrara retook all the lands from which he had been ousted.

[1] As early as April, 1510, the Venetians had warned the Pope that the Cardinal was a friend of the French, but their warning was disregarded. See Brosch. "Papst Julius II.," p 224.

[2] Sismondi, vol. vii. ch ix.; Gregorovius, vol. viii. ch. i. pp. 65–7. These facts are also mentioned by all the Venetian historians, such as Bembo, Friuli, Marin Sanuto, &c. Also by Paride dei Grassi, who shows more hostility than the others to Cardinal Alidosi: "qui pastor servare Bononiam debuit et potuit, prodidit et perdidit, die iovis xx. Maii, hora circiter xx." In his opinion the

example of great severity, and, in fact, soon deprived his nephew of his office, and subjected him to trial by four Cardinals.

But there were other events causing him still more pain during this year of ill fortune. The affair of the Council tormented him as a continual menace to his authority. And although scarcely a subject for real anxiety, it was no laughing matter to a man who had so often threatened to use the same weapon against Alexander VI., and who, like the predecessors he had so harshly censured, had failed to maintain his solemn promise of assembling the Council within two years after his election. When at Bologna, in the September of 1510, the Pope had shown great indignation at the unexpected news that five of his Cardinals had changed their course, and were on the way to Florence in order to go to Pisa, where the Council, or *Conciliabolo*, as he called it, had been convoked after the meeting at Tours. Louis XII. had himself demanded of the Florentines that they should at least offer one proof of fidelity to France, by allowing it to be held within their dominions. This demand caused a lengthy debate in the Council of Eighty, at a meeting attended by more than one hundred members. They had no desire to offend the Pope, but neither did they wish to forfeit the French alliance, and this second consideration prevailed, being supported by the suffrage of the followers of Savonarola, who had always urged this plan of a Council. So, as early as the month of May, it was decided to consent to the King's request; but it was also agreed to keep their decision secret. The only effect of this secrecy was that the Pope for a time preserved a show of mild and temperate intentions towards the Republic, upon which, however, he was resolved to wreak vengeance at the earliest opportunity.[1]

Meanwhile a summons to the Council of Pisa, placarded on the doors of various churches, had been prepared by the Cardinals of

estimation in which the morals of Julius II. were held. Certainly his youthful career fully justified many accusations; but the particulars to which allusions were made, were often totally unsupported by proof. This is confirmed even by Brosch, although his book is conceived in a spirit of hostility to Julius II. On more than one occasion, after having carefully related and examined these charges, he concludes with the remark that they only prove how bad was the Pope's reputation as to his moral and private character. *Apropos* to what was said in those days about his relations with the Cardinal, he finishes with these words: "Die emporenden Beschuldigungen, welche deshalb auf Julius Namen gehauft wurden, fallen zuruck auf die Lasterer jener zeit und sind unzweifelhaft ein Nachklang ihrer Reden, wahrend es hochst fraglich ist, ob der Papst solche wirklich verdient habe" (p. 224).

[1] Filippo dei Nerli, "Commentarii dei fatti civili occorsi dentro la città di Firenze." Augsburg, 1728, bk. v. pp. 102, 103; Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," bk. ix. ch. iv.

the 12th, after which it was decided that the fourth should be held on the 13th December, at Milan. The indifference, or rather patent disapproval of the Republic, the hostility of the mass of the people, and a serious riot that had consequently occurred between the Pisans and the Florentine soldiers on the one side, the French and the lackeys of the Cardinals on the other, the which riot was only with difficulty suppressed by Othon de Foix and Châtillon, who were both wounded, were the reasons leading to the speedy removal of the Council to Milan.

In that city the Cardinals slandered the Florentines in every way, trying to irritate the minds of the French officers against them. But even in Milan the Council encountered the same general indifference, the same aversion on the part of the clergy, who, on the Cardinals' arrival, refused to celebrate divine service. The lesser clergy only gave reluctant obedience to the orders of the Senate; the Canons and others continued their resistance until they were threatened with exile, or Frenchmen were sent into their houses.[1] The truth was, that as Guicciardini justly observed, all perceived that these Cardinals were merely ambitious men, stirred by personal interests, and that they stood in "no less need of being reformed than those whom they intended to reform."[2] The Council served as a weapon of war in the great contest so soon to be decided by arms, and therefore public attention was fixed on to that contest alone, to the exclusion of everything else. Accordingly, the Florentines, although finally freed from the annoyance of the Council, experienced no relief, for they had now to study if it were possible to preserve the bare existence of the Republic in the flood of coming disaster.

[1] Desjardins, *op. cit.*, vol. ii pp 543–5; Pandolfini's letter from Milan, dated 1–7th December.
[2] "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. bk. x. ch. ii. p. 46.

nephew of Prospero Colonna, condemned by his family to assume the cowl, notwithstanding his vocation for the sword, came to the front for a short time as a new Stefano Porcaro. But just as a republican form of government was being organized, it was learnt that the terrible Pope had regained his full strength, and all plans dissolved in air.

In fact, Julius II. plunged into action with greater ardour than before. Both Pisa and Florence were placed under interdict for having sanctioned the preliminary formalities of the Council on the 1st of September, and he only absolved the Duke of Urbino, in order to make use of him in the war. He then concluded a so-called Holy League with Venice and Spain against France, leaving the Emperor the option of joining him. The Pope was to collect 400 men-at-arms, 500 light horse, 6000 infantry; Spain 1200 men-at-arms, 1000 light horse, 10,000 infantry; Venice 800 men-at-arms, 1000 light horse, 8000 infantry. Besides this the Pope was to contribute 20,000 ducats the month, Venice the same amount, and also fourteen light galleys, and Spain twelve light galleys.[1] The viceroy of Naples, Don Raimondo de Cardona, was nominated Captain General. The objects of the League were: the union of the Catholic Church; the extirpation of the *Conciliabolo;* the recovery of Bologna and all other territories, Ferrara included, belonging or presumed to belong to the Church; the recovery of the Venetian territory in Northern Italy; and war against all opposing these schemes, that is against France. The 5th of October, the Holy League was solemnly proclaimed in the church of Santa Maria del Popolo at Rome. On the 24th, the schismatic Cardinals of Santa Croce, Cosenza, St. Malô and Bayeux were stripped of their dignities and benefices. Cardinal San Severino was for the moment spared; but it was soon his turn to feel the weight of the Pope's anger.[2] Besides these measures his Holiness, the better to show his hostility towards the Florentine Republic, nominated Cardinal dei Medici as Legate, first at Perugia and then at Bologna.

The Florentines felt that the storm was upon them, and tried to shelter themselves as they best could They had succeeded in obtaining the departure from Pisa of the three procurators who had on the 1st of September accomplished the purely formal preliminaries of the Council.[3] By a Commission dated 10th of September, they then despatched Machiavelli on various errands, first

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 29.
[2] Lehmann, "Das Pisaner Concil von" 1511; Brosch, "Papst Julian II and die Grundung des Kirchen Staates," p. 234 and fol.
[3] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," p. 163.

certa, la contenteza de'2/3 de' padroni, la possessione facile, le pruove della simonìa vera et autenticha, le quali son tucte cose da farci correre un di cotesti cortigiani, che non soghono attendere ad altro che ad simile imprese, quando e' ne possono havere. Et tu sai che per la soddomia, che è causa più ingiusta, sono molti che hanno e' benefitii litigiosi, et assai li hanno perduti. E costì messer Giovanni delli Albizi, che è huomo d' animo: penserai se ad questo tu potessi valertene in cosa alcuna. Nicholò nostro ci farà tucti quelli favori che saranno possibili, et parli mill' anni vetere el fummo di questo fuoco. Le altre lettere si mandorno per la via dello 'mbasciatore, et harai ricevuto la cifera, con la quale hora ti scrivo. Di nuovo ti ricordo el mettere in questa impresa huomo che spenda et habbi favori da sè. *Vale.*[1]

DOCUMENT II.[2]

Letter of the Ten of Balìa to Paolo Vitelli urging him to take Pisa by storm.—15th August, 1499

Illustri Capitaneo Paulo Vytello. Die xv augusti 1499. Anchorchè la Signoria Vostra, per mezo de nostri Comissarii, habbi più volte inteso io animo et desiderio nostro, et che quella per la sua innata affectione verso della nostra Excelsa Repubblica non habbi bisogno di essere altrimenti pregata et exortata ad expedire quelle chose chi ci habbino a tornare in utilità et honore maximo; *tamen* per lo offitio et debito nostro non vogliamo omettere di scrivere alla Signoria Vostra, et monstrarle come li infiniti oblighi habbiamo con seco, e' quali non sendo necessarii, non rianderemo altrimenti, richieghono di corroborarsi con questo ultimo della recuperatione di Pisa, per la quale *potissimum* li fu concesso lo arbitrio delli exerciti nostri. Et veramente quando noi pensiamo con noi medesimi la somma sua virtù, et quanto felice exito habbino auto e' preteriti sua conati, noi non dubitiamo in alcuno modo di conseguire questa desiderata victoria. Dall' altra parte, el desiderio che habbiamo di conseguirla, ci fa stara dubbii assai che la dilatione del tempo non rechi tale incomodità et disordine seco, che non sia in nostro potere el ripararvi; nè ci darebbe mancho dispiacere quando tal cosa seguissi (*quod absit*), l' honore di che si priverrebbe Vostra Illustrissima Signoria, che lo utile, commodo et sicurtà dello Stato nostro, di che saremo privati noi, perchè non mancho habbiamo a core la grandeza sua che la preservatione nostra, di che

[1] At the back of the letter there is written in another hand: "O' trovato *virum boni conditionis, qui vocatur* messer Bartolbleo (*sic*) Scaranfi, che expedisce *gratis*, et serviracci senza voler chosa alcuna. Farassi la impretatione, dipoi, avanti si pigli piato, lo consigliereno bene."

[2] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No 91, a c 77. In the margin the amanuensis has written *Exortatoria pulcherrima*. As we have mentioned in the body of the work, we have excellent reason to believe that this and the two following letters are by Machiavelli, nevertheless we cannot positively assert them to be his, not having discovered the original manuscript, but only the copy preserved in the Chancery registers.



APPENDIX.

DOCUMENT I.

An Autograph Letter of Machiavelli, though not written in his name, and without signature, date or address, relating to family affairs.[1]

Carissime frater. Sabato fece 8 dì, ti scripse,[2] dandoti notitia come e' ci pareva da pensare di far 'San Piero in Mercato' litigioso,[3] come hauto da messer Baldassarre per simonìa perchè 'l piovano vechio non volle mai cedere alla renuntia, se non haveva cento ducati da Pèro, et di questo ce ne è tanti testimoni et sì autentici et sì disposti al provare, che se questa cosa si dà in accomandita ad chi voglia la golpe, el priore ci ha una speranza grandissima, et crede che sia costì chi ci attenderà. Messesi innanzi messer P°. Accolti o el Cardinal di San Piero in Vincula o messer Ferrando Puccietti.

Ad me pare che tu ti ingegni di tòrre huomo che *non solum* sia atto ad favorire la causa, ma anchora ad splendere di suo, et che dal canto nostro non corra spesa ; et più tosto convenire collui grassamente, purchè e titoli una volta rimanghino : dell' altre cose . . . mettile ad tuo modo, perchè la spesa si lievi da dosso ad noi, et che altri[4] . . . colli favori et con la industria et con danari. Dal canto nostro puoi offerire la simonia

[1] "Carte del Machiavelli," cassetta I. n 54. It was written in cipher, is deciphered in Machiavelli's handwriting, but refers to him as a third person Neither does its style afford any proof that it is his. We give it as a simple curiosity, and because it has some relation with his two first letters See text, book i. chap I.

[2] It was first written thus: *ti scrivèmo el priore et io;* this was afterwards cancelled and the words: *ti scripse* substituted

[3] In the "Quaderno di Ricordanze," quoted by me in book i chap i., it is recorded that in 1393 Ciango dei Castellani left, among other legacies, to Buoninsegna and Filippo, son of Lorenzo Machiavelli, all the rights of patronage in the parish of San Piero in Mercato.

[4] Gaps in the original which is torn at this point.

iusta causa di partirsi, et e' nostri cittadini, per parere loro essere dondolati, non saranno per volersi più votare le borse, veggendo non essere del passato suto alcuno utile alla loro città Noi vi parliamo liberamente a ciò che con la prudentia vostra possiate toccare fondo, et a noi fare intendere apertamente come ci habbiamo a governare, se hora non succeda la cosa secondo l' ordine dato [1] Parendoci non havere mancato in nulla, saremo in ferma opinione di essere trastullati, et faremo tutta quella provisione per la salute et honore nostro che ci occorrerà. Et perchè dal canto nostro, come insino ad hora si è facto, non resti ad fare alcuna chosa, siamo contenti che il Capitano facci venire costì a' soldi sua messer Piero Ghambacorti,[2] et riceva *etiam* e' balestrieri a cavallo sono in Pisa, secondo che voi ne scrivete. Il che facciamo contra a nostra voglia; per molte ragioni, le quali noi vi habbiamo per l' adrieto significate · pure il desiderio habbiamo fare piacere a Sua Signoria ci fa non pensare se non satisfarli ; et così confortate Sua Signoria satisfare a noi di questo unico et singulare benefitio, di fare questa benedecta giornata, della quale voi, per nostra parte, con quelle parole vi occorreranno più efficaci li pregherrete, et con ogni instantia graverrete.

Le genti del Signore di Piombino si potranno in parte satisfare alla giunta de' danari vi manderemo, et con questa speranza li intracterrete

Habbiamo questa mattina lettere da Milano, come e' Franzesi hanno expugnato Annone, castello populato assai, forte di sito, di munitioni et di presidio, in uno dì, et noi siamo già con cotesta obsidione a di 20, et non sapiamo qual successo seguirà.

Da Lucha intendiamo come Rinieri della Saxetta è tornato in Pisa, sì che vedete quello possiamo sperare, poi che luy vi creda stare sicuro hora, et per lo adrieto ne dubitava. *Valete.*

DOCUMENT IV.

Another Letter of the Ten to the Florentine Commissaries with Paolo Vitelli.—25th August, 1499, *attributed to Machiavelli.*

Comissariis in Castris contra Pisanos. Die xxv augusti 1499.[3]—Se voi vedessi in quanta mala contenteza et afflictione di animo è tutta questa città, non che a voi che siete membri di quella, ma a qualunche altro verrebbe istupore et admirazione grande ; ma chi sapessi come le cose fino a qui sieno procedute, et con quale spendio conducte, et di che speranza nutriti, non se ne maraviglierebbe, perchè conoscerebbe noy et questa città dopo una lunga fatica et dispendio, quando aspectava indubitata victoria, essere minacciati di manifesta ruina ; et sì de repente la vedrebbe menare da uno extremo all' altro, che più tosto la iudicherebbe animosa per non si prosternere et invilire in tanta augustia, che altrimenti. Et veramente e' ci dorrebbe manco ogni damno che di cotesta impresa fussi resultato a la città nostra, quando e' si fussi un

[1] Here in the margin is written : *Verba minantia.*
[2] This is he who was afterwards arrested and tried in Florence.
[3] Florence Archives, cl x dist. 3, No 91, a. c 85t.

sappiamo non bisognare farle altra fede che le opere che si sono facte sino a qui, le quali sempre si accresceranno con li meriti suoi. Sia adunque Vostra Signoria contenta et pregata volere prima coronare se di cotanta victoria quale è cotesta, con admiratione nan solo di tutta Italia, ma di tutto el mondo; et dipoi, con satisfactione et nostra e di tutto questo popolo, preso supplicio di cotesti nostri ribelli, et reintegrati delle cose nostre, possiamo voltarci a chosa che facci la città nostra felicissima, et la Signoria Vostra non seconda ad alcuno altro, benchè antico et famosissimo capitano. A la quale del continuo ci offeriamo.

DOCUMENT III.[1]

Letter of the Ten to the Florentine Commissaries at the Camp of Captain Paolo Vitelli.—20th August, 1499.

Comissariis in Castris contra Pisanos. Die xx augusti 1499. Noi veggiamo, et con tanto dispiacere nostro quanto si possi mai sentire per alcun tempo, differirsi in modo cotesta giornata, che noi non sapiamo più che si sperare di bene; perchè, nonobstante che voi scriviate che per tutta stanocte futura saranno ad ordine tutte le cose disegnate; *tamen* per le parole del Capitano, non ci pare ancora vedere terra, nè ad che porto noi habbiamo ad applicare questa barchetta. Et se Sua Signoria dice che è per fare quello di bene può, et che elli è necessario che ancor noi lo aiutiamo, etc.; noi non veggiamo in che cosa noi li siamo mancati, perchè e' ci pare havere infino a qui et concedutoli ogni cosa che Sua Signoria ci ha adomandata in sua particolarità, et provistolo in tutto quello ci ha richiesto a benefitio della impresa; et per ultimo con quanta celerità ci è suto possibile, vi habbiamo provisto delle balle della lana, delle palle del fuocho lavorato, et della polvere in qualla quantità si è possuto; et questa mattina, per non mancare del consueto, vi habbiamo mandato le lame del ferro stagnato, secondo ne richiedete; et e' danari per rinfrescare e' soldati vi si sono promessi ogni volta ci advisavi il dì della giornata. Ma veggiendo con varie cavillationi et agiramenti tornare invano ogni nostra fatica, et ogni nostra diligentia usatasi anihillarsi,[2] sentiamo dolore infinito; et se la honestà o le leggi el permettessino, egli è più giorni che due di noi sarebbono venuti costì, per vedere con gli occhi et personalmente intendere la origine di cotanti aggiramenti, poi che voi o non ce li volete scrivere o in facto non ve li pare conoscere. Et veramente noi credevamo, et ancora non possiamo se non crederlo, che cotesti Signori volessino più presto tentare la fortuna, et essere ributtati per forza da cotesta expeditione, che per socordia et inertia, consumando il tempo, essere necessitati, per la diminutione della reputatione et delle forze, partirsi di costì con una inhonesta fuga. Il che succederà ad ogni modo, se passa due giorni da oggi che la forza non si sia tentata; perchè, venuta la pagha nuova, cotesti pochi soldati vi restano, haranno

[1] Florence Archives, cl x dist 3. No 91, a c. 81.
[2] In the margin is written: *O quantus moeror!*

possessi soccorrere Anghiari o monstrarli qualche speranza di soccorso, ci sarebbe sopradmodo grato, et tornerebbe molto approposito alle cose nostre: il che ci fe' più desiderare uno adviso haviamo hauto da huomo prudente, che ci scrive dalla Pieve ad San Stephano, significandoci prima come gli Anghiaresi si difendono ingenuamente; et che se si mandassi un cento cavalli et qualche fante, admonendogli che facessino spalla ad quelli della Pieve et ad altri del paese, sarebbono per molestare intanto e' nemici, che sarebbono necessitati levarsi de campo Et per questa cagione ci è parso mandarti la presente volando, ad ciò veggha quello si può fare in questa cosa, et non manchi del possibile Et ad noi pare che, havendo hora la gente franzese alle spalle, si possa governare le cose costì più audacemente, et con più fiducia metterisi avanti; et però di nuovo ti ricordiamo, se possibile è, se non in facto, *saltem* in demostratione, rincorare quelli nostri fedeli d' Anghiari, si per dare animo loro ad stare forti, si *etiam* per non lo tòrre ad li altri, et per non dimostrare ad li subditi nostri che noi li lasciamo in preda et si vilmente nelle mani d' un semplice soldato. et di questo ne aspectiamo risposta, et lo effecto se li è possibile.

Noi attenderemo ad sollecitare e' Franzesi, e' quali fieno ad Sexto domani ad ogni modo, et di mano in mano li respigneremo secondo che ad voi occorra o al capitano di epsi, con el quale speriamo di essere domattina ad Lugho. Scriverete oltre ad di questo ad Poppi, alla Pieve, et se voi potete, ad Anghiari et al Borgo, confortando, monstrando gli aiuti propinqui et che presto con loro satisfactione et danno delli adversarii saremo liberi da ogni molestia. *Bene valete.*

DOCUMENT VI.[1]

Letter of the Ten to the Commissary at Borgo la S. Sepolero.—14th May, 1503

Petro Ardinghello Commissar. Burgi Diex iiij maij 1503.—Noi haviamo questo dì ricevute tre tua, l' una di hieri et l' altre d' avanti hieri, et commendiamoti della diligentia che usi et hai usata in intendere et advisarci Et perchè tu desideri sapere prima quello che delle genti venute ad Perugia non ne intendiamo, et dipoi quanto noi confidiamo nella natura et fortuna di quello Duca, ti rispondiamo, che da Roma di coteste genti nè dell' altre non se ne è mai inteso nulla, et se ci havessimo ad rapportare ad quelle lettere, ad Perugia non sarebbe un cavallo; nè ce ne maravigliamo come fai tu, perchè le ven, gono di verso Roma et non da Roma, sendo sute alloggiate 30 o 47 miglia discosto, et movendosi *ad nutum Principis*, et ad hora che lo Oratore nostro non ne può havere notitia, non ce ne ha possuto advisare. Pertanto conviene rapportarcene ad te, del quale crediamo li advisi essere fedeli et ben fondati; nè possiamo di coteste cose fare altro iuditio che si possa chi è costì, nè dartene altro adviso.

[1] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 103, at sheet 172: Machiavelli's autograph.

tracto secondo el desiderio nostro tentato animosamente la forza; perchè, se ne fussino suti ributtati, si sarebbe da' nostri cittadini con più prompteza reparata tanta forza che si fussi al nemico superiore. Ma sendosi consumata tanta fanteria, et preparata con tanti danni, in otio et sanza farne alcuno experimento in favore della nostra città non sapiamo nè che ci dire nè con qual ragioni exscusarci in cospecto di tutto questo popolo, el quale ci parrà havere pasciuto di favole, tenendolo di dì in dì con vana promessa di certa victoria. Il che tanta più ci duole quanto più ce lo pare havere conosciuto, et con ogni efficacia ricordata alli antecessori vostri.[1] Pure, poi che Dio o la fortuna e qual si fussi altra causa ha condocto le cose in termine che bisogna o soldare di nuovo fanteria, o perdere, con perpetua infamia coteste artiglierie, ci sforzeremo di non mancare di fare quanto ci fia possibile.

Et perchè nel fare nuovi danari, per havere a fare nuovi provvedimenti, andrà più tempo; et desiderando che in questo mezo coteste cose si salvino, habbiamo scripto per tutto el territorio nostro, per numero di comandati, de' quali buona parte dovevano essere costì subito, et noi seguiremo col provedimento, per poterci valere di buon numero di fanti freschi e pratichi come ci scrivete. . . .

Siamo a hore 3, et habbiamo differito la staffetta, perchè desideravamo pure con quella mandarvi somma di danari. Ma per essere hoggi domenica, et tutto il giorno suti occupati nella pratica, non ne habbiamo possuto expedire alcuna somma; ma domattina di buon' ora vi se ne manderà quelli ci fia possibile.

DOCUMENT V.[2]

Letter of the Ten to the Commissary Giacomini Tebalducci.
1st July, 1502.

Commissario generali, Antonio Iacomino. Die prima iulii 1502.—Hiarsera ti si scripse quello ci occorreva in risposta di più tua; haviamo dipoi ricevute l' ultime di hieri, et per quelle inteso cosa che ci satisfa, et questo è come Anghiari si tiene, et come e' nemici non lo possono molto sforzare per mancamento di palle, etc. Et havendo dipoi ricevuto una lettera da M.re di Volterra,[3] el quale pochi dì sono mandamo ad Urbino ad el Duca Valentinese, della quale ti mandiamò copia, et per quella intenderai quello che lui giudicha et advisa delle genti di quello Duca. El quale adviso, quando fussi vero, ci renderebbe più sicuri, et più facile ci farebbe la recuperatione delle cose nostre. Ma desidereremmo bene che la perdita di quelle non fussi maggiore che la si sia suta infino ad qui, ad ciò che si cominciassi dipoi più facilmente ad racquistare la reputatione, et non si continuassi in perderla. Et per questo se si

[1] Their two predecessors had been seized by malarious fever, and one of them, Piero Corsini, had died of it. They were therefore succeeded by Paolo Antonio Soderini and Francesco Gherardi.—*Vide* Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," ch. xx p. 207.

[2] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No. 101, a. c. 2: Machiavelli's autograph.

[3] Francesco Soderini, Bishop of Volterra, at that time ambassador to Valentinois.

restiamo advisati della cagione perchè hieri non passasti Arno, et cóme hoggi disegnavate ad ogni modo passarlo, et noi crediamo lo habbiate facto. Et quanto a' fanti da pagarsi di nuovo, vi si mandorno hieri e' danari, et con lo adviso come havessi ad soldare et pagarli, et così come e' danari dovettono arrivare hiarsera di buona hora, così questa sera debbono essere arrivati Lazzero di Scaramuccia et il Guicciardino, perchè così ci promissono. Et perchè voi ci dite circha el capo da darsi ad quelli cento fanti da farsi costì, non'vi parere ad proposito Bernardo di messere Criacho, rispecto alla emulatione, ci conformiamo facilmente nell' opinione vostra, et se per la nostra vi se ne scripse, fu più per ricordo che perchè ne fussimo al tucto resoluti; et però ve ne governerete come vi parrà, et noi tucto approverremo.

El discorso che voi ci fate del passare in val di Serchio, et la prontepza dello animo vostro, non ci potrebbe più satisfare, il che tanto più vi si adcrescerà, quanto voi vi vedrete provisti di quella forza più per li fanti 200 nuovamente ordinati Nè vi potremo più confortare ad procedere animosamente et tirare la 'mpresa avanti; perchè veggiamo el tempo fuggirsi fra le mani, et essere in preiuditio nostro et in favore de'nemici, e' quali si vede che non pensono ad altro, se non come e' possessino temporeggiarci. Voliamo nondimancho ricordarvi più per el debito dello ofitio nostro, che per credere che bisogni farlo, che noi equalmente desideriamo et stimiamo la salute di cotesto exercito quanto il danno dell'inimici, et però vi confortiamo ad adoperare in questa parte animo et in quella prudentia, et ad pensare bene ogni accidente che potessi nascere, non perchè vi facci stòrre dalla impresa, nè dal procedere avanti; ma per farvi entrare ne'periculi con maggiore securtà et più cautamente. Le cose che noi vi havemo ad ricordare in questa parte sarebbono molte; ma non ci pare da dirle per giudicarlo superfluo, sapiendo voi el paese come egli è facto, le fiumare come le stanno, quello possete temere da Pisa per la disperatione loro, quello da Lucha per la invidia et odio naturale di ogni nostro bene. Et havendo innanzi ad gli ochi tucte queste cose, potrete facilmente pensare ad li rimedii, e' quali noi giudichiamo facili, stando voi ordinati sempre, et ciascuno sotto le bandiere sua, non permettendo ad alchuno che esca dell'ordine, o per cupidità di preda, o per altra insolentia che suole disordinare e' campi, et fare spesso ruine grandissime di che stiamo di buona voglia per conoscere e' capi, et sapere che tenete bene el segno nostro, et vi fate obbidire.

Noi, perchè la desperatione de' Pisani non ci offenda, haviamo provedute quelle tante forze havete con voi, ma perchè l' odio de' Luchesi non vi nuoca oltre alle forze vi trovate, come più dì fa vi si dètte notitia, si mandò Andrea Adimari in montagna di Pistoia, L° Spinelli in val di Nievole, et prima si era mandato Girolamo de' Pilli in Lunigiana, con ordine tenessi parati tucti gli huomini delle loro provincie et in su quella frontiera di Lucha, per assaltare e' Luchesi da quella banda, quando e' movessino contro a di voi in su la factione del val di Serchio. Commissesi loro s' intendessino con voi, et colli cenni, ordini et consigli vostri si governassino Non si sono dipoi altrimenti sollecitati, per volerli lasciare disporre ad voi, e' quali scriverrete quanto sia necessario, componendovi con quelli del modo, acciò che altri stia a' termini, et che disordine non segua sanza bisogno.

Et se noi habbiamo da pensare alla natura et fortuna di quello Signore, non crediamo che la meriti disputa, perchè tucti gli andamenti et cenni suoi meritono di essere considerati et advertiti da chi è discosto, non che da noi ad chi lui è addosso Nè manchiamo di pensare che quelle genti conviene sieno venute là, o per venire alle stantie, o per assicurarsi di quella città, o per assaltarci per divertire el guasto, o per darci tali sospecti che noi o non diamo el guasto a' Pisani, per paura di essere divertiti, o, dandosi, non si dia gagliardamente, come si farebbe quando fussimo liberi da ogni sospecto Le prime dua cagioni ci dànno piccola brigha, la terza pensiamo che el Duca ne habbi voglia grande et che la desideri, quando e' non habbi ad havere altro rispecto che l' nostro. Et perchè noi non veggiamo però che sieno cessate tucti e' rispecti, ne stiamo alquanto sollevati con lo animo, perchè nè lui nè el Papa sono sì pochi obbligati ad el Re, nè el Re ha tanti impedimenti, che loro non li debbino havere, non vogliamo dire reverentia, ma respecti grandi, o che lui facciendo loro qualche temerità non li possa correggere. Et benchè noi conosciamo quello Duca volonteroso, giovane et pieno di confidentia ; *tamen* non lo giudichiamo al tucto temerario, et che sia per per entrare in una impresa che facci alla fine ruinarlo, come delli altri che infino ad qui vi sono entrati Non siamo però obstinati in questa opinione, anzi crediamo che facilmente ci potremo ingannare, et per questo si pensa ad non lasciare cotesto paese al tucto abbandonato di forze Diciamoti bene questo, che se si ha da dubitare di assalto manifesto ad 12 soldi per lira, e' se ne ha da dubitare ad 18 soldi di furto, et acciò che lui sotto qualche colore potessi nascondersi, come sarebbe di fare rebellare una di coteste terre, et possere excusarsene. Et perchè ad questo si ha ad pensare più noi, più te lo haviamo sempre ricordato, et di nuovo te lo ricordiamo, che ti guardi dagl' inganni, et di non essere giunto incauto in modo, o che di nocte non ti truovi e' nemici in corpo, o di dì non sia ad tempo ad serrare le porte

Nè possiamo dirti altro in questa materia, nè dartene altri advisi, perchè quanto ti si discorre et scrivetisi, ti si dice in su li advisi tuoi ; et quando quelle genti vi fussino venute perquella quarta cagione di farci o risolvere la presa o ire freddamente, siamo disposti che ci facci male la forza et non la opinione. Nè voliamo desistere, nè allentare un punto da lo incepto nostro ; perchè ci conforta ad questo el malo essere de' Pisani, el desiderio di toccarne fondo, la causa iusta et li conforti della Maestà del Re, el quale non vorrà che le cose cominciate sotto gli auspitii suoi habbino altro fine che honorevole. . . .

DOCUMENT VII.[1]

Letter of the Ten to the Commissaries at the Camp before Pisa.— 27th May, 1503

Commissariis in Castris. Die 27 *Maij* 1503 —Questo giorno occorre fare risposta alla vostra di hiarsera, data ad 2½ di notte, per la quale

[1] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist 3, No. 107, at sheet 241 : Machiavelli's autograph.

di cotesto paese all' intorno se ne può trarre tanti, perchè bisognia che siano buoni, pagandogli noi nel modo soprascripto. Et havendo ragunato costì 1000 marraioli, secondo lo adviso di Francesco Serragli, potrai examinare fra loro quali siéno sufficienti all' opera soprascripta, et li farai fermare et provedere degli instrumenti loro ; et el resto provedere in quel modo che ti occorrerà meglio. Et non ti bastando ad adempiere el numero questi luoghi convicini, te ne andrai ne' luoghi la propinqui ; et quando non si potessi el primo di cominciare più opera con dumila huomini voliamo si cominci con quelli più si può, et così quanto prima si può, adempia el numero decto.

Ragionerai tucte queste cose con Giuliano Lapi, et ti varrai dell' opera sua per comandare ad quelle cose che in tale factione sono necessarie. Mena decto Giuliano seco tre o quattro huomini per valersene, et noi facciamo conto che tu ti vaglia, oltre ad quelli, di Pagolo da Parrano et altri simili, che fussino in cotesto campo buoni ad essere soldati, et ad indirizare una simile faccenda. Nè ti scrivereno altro in questa cosa, ma ci rimettereno ad quello che ad bocca ti discorrerà Giuliano Lapi. Et el disopra ti si è scripto, acciò che intenda avanti allo arrivare suo, e' meriti di questa cosa, vi volga l' animo, et ti prepari ad quella con ogni modo possibile.

Fara' ci scrivere appunto da chi ne ha la cura, quante marre, vanghe, pale, et libbre d' auti si truovono costì in munitione' et di tucto ci darai adviso Potrai cominciare ad fare comandare e' Comuni che venghino con quelli huomini ti parrà, et un dì, quale tu giudicherai che si possa, principiare l' opera ; et farai che portino seco la metà vanghe, et l' altra metà meze pale et meze zappe.

DOCUMENT IX.

Letter of the Ten to the Commissary T. Tosinghi, 28th September, 1504.[1]

Tomaso Tosinghi, Commissario in Campo. Die 28 septembris, 1504.—Questo di si sono ricevute tre vostre lettere di hieri, le quali, perchè ci confermavano in quello medesimo che voi ci havevo scripto per la de' 26 dì, accrescendo le dubitationi et le difficultà circa el fornire coteste opere, deliberamo haverne consulta del Consiglio degli Ottanta, et di buon numero di cittadini, per vedere come havamo ad procedere. Et insumma loro consigliono che per ogni respecto si debbe ire avanti et non abbandonare l' opera, anzi raddoppiare la buona diligentia, perchè l' habbi el fine si desidera, et non perdonare ad alcuna spesa, nè disagio ; et lo hanno consigliato con tanta caldeza che non si potrebbe stimare. Pertanto è bene che si faccia in modo che nè per voi, nè per noi manchi, et se sturbo veruno habbi ad seguire, nasca dal tempo ; perchè desideriamo, avendoci, addolere di alcuna cosa, dolerci del tempo et non delli huomini. Et per non mancare dal canto nostro, questa sera mandereno danari per li operai, et così sollecitereno le altre cose che per noi si hanno ad sollecitare Ma

[1] Florence Archives, cl. x. dist. 3, No 112, at sheet 152 · Machiavelli's autograph.

Et perchè voi ci dite, che non potendo condurre con voi in una volta tante vectovaglie in val di Serchio, che voi potessi fare quella factione, et che, bisognandovi ritornare per esse, è bene pensare di farne una canova o ad Bientina o ad Monte Carlo; vi si risponde che questa cura ha ad essere vostra, et di quello di voi che ha ad rimanere ad Cascina, dove è bene rimanghi tu, Pierfrancesco, ad ogni modo, perchè una volta havete la Comunità obbligata ad portare el pane, havete costì la farina, havete e' ministri che ne hanno caricho, a' quali potrete ordinare dove le habbino ad volgere et ad farne canova, per rinfrescarne lo exercito, anchora che ad noi paressi che fussi più ad proposito fare capo con quelle a Bientina che ad Monte Carlo, per potervi servire del lago, et condurvele co' navicelli incontro.

Noi crediamo che vi sia venuto in consideratione in questa passata d'Arno, ch' e' Pisani non possono havere altro expediente ad molestarvi, che assaltare Cascina o qualchuno di cotesti luoghi nostri; et siamo certi, havendovi pensato, vi harete anchora proveduto. Et noi, stimando questa cosa, disegnavamo mandare ad Cascina gli huomini d'arme di Luca Savello, e' quali questa sera in parte debbono essere comparsi ad Poggibonzi. Ma non volendo noi *etiam* abbandonare in tucto le cose di sopra, per esservi pure qualche cavallo del Duca, c'è parso fermarle ad Poggibonzi, per potercene servire ad un tracto, et ad Cascina et di sopra. Haviamovi voluto scrivere la verità, et voi darete nome che decte genti habbino ad venire subito costì ad Cascina, per tenere e' nemici addreto, et valervi di questa reputatione. . . .

DOCUMENT VIII.

Letter of the Ten to Antonio Giacomini.—29th August, 1504.[1]

Antonio Jacomino. Die xx augusti 1504.—Hiarsera ti si scripse della deliberatione facta da noi circha el voltare Arno alla torra ad Fagiano, et come noi volevamo fare questa factione subito dopo el guasto, et che per questo egli era necessario che tu pensassi dove, dato el guasto, stèssi bene el campo, per rendere securo chi lavorerà ad tale opera. Di nuovo ti replichiamo per questa el medesimo, perchè tale deliberatione è ferma, et voliamo ad ogni modo che la si metta innanzi; et però bisognia che oltre allo aiutare tale cosa collo effecto, la si aiuti *etiam* colla demostratione. Questo ti si dice, perchè se fussi costì alcuno condottiero ad chi non paressi, voliamo tu li possa fare intendere quale sia lo animo nostro, et che noi voliamo unitamente et con le parole et co' fatti la sia favorita.

Et perchè noi non voliamo che si perda punto di tempo, domattina mandereno costà Giuliano Lapi e Colombino, ad ciò sieno teco, et, mostroti el disegnio, possiate ordinare quanto sia necessario. Et acciò intenda qualche particolare, e' si è ragionata che bisognino dumila opere il dì, et che gli habbino le vanghe et zappe. voliamo pagare questi huomini ad dieci soldi el dì per ciascuno. Bisogna adunque pensare se

[1] Florence Archives, cl x. dist. 3, No. 112, at sheet 89t: Machiavelli's autograph.

DOCUMENT XII.[1]

Machiavelli's Report on the Institution of the New Militia.

Voi mi havete richieste che io vi scriva el fondamento di questa Ordinanza, e dove la si truovi : farollo ; et ad maggiore vostra cognitione, mi farò un poco da alto, et voi harete patienza ad leggierla.

Io lascierò stare indrieto el disputare se li era bene o no ordinare lo Stato vostro alle armi ; perchè ognuno sa che chi dice Impeiio, Regno, Principato, Repubblica ; chi dice huomini che comandono, comenciandosi dal primo grado et descendendo infino al padrone d' uno brigantino, dice iustitia et armi. Voi della iustitia ne havete non molta, et dell' armi non punto , et el modo ad rihavere l' uno et l' altro è solo ordinarsi all' armi per deliberatione publica, et con buono ordine, et mantenerlo. Nè v' ingannino cento cotanti anni che voi sete vissuti altrimenti et mantenutivi , perchè se voi considerrete bene questi tempi et quelli, vedrete essere impossibile potere preservare la vostra libertà in quel medesimo modo. Ma perchè questa è materia chiara, et quando pure la si havessi addisputare, bisognerebbe entrare per altra via, la lascierò stare indreto Et presupponendo che la sententia sia data, et che sia bene armarsi, volendo ordinare lo Stato di Firenze, alle armi, era necessario examinare come questa militia si avessi ad introdurre. Et considerando lo Stato vostro, si truova diviso in città, contado et distrecto; sì che bisognava cominciare questa militia in uno di questi luoghi, o in dua, o in tutti ad tre ad un tracto Et perchè le cose grandi hanno bisogno d' essere menate adagio, non si poteva in nessuno modo, nè in dua, nè in tucti ad tre e' sopraddecti luoghi, sanza confusione et sanza pericolo introdurla · bisognava pertanto eleggierne uno Nè piacque di tòrre la città, perchè chi considera uno exercito, ad dividerlo grossamente, lo truova composto di huomini che comandono et che ubbidiscono, et di huomini che militano ad piè et che militano ad cavallo ; et hauendo ad introdurre forma di exercito in una provincia inconsueta all' armi, bisognava, come tutte l' altre discipline, cominciarsi da la parte più facile ; et sanza dubbio egli è più facile introdurre militia ad piè che ad cavallo, et è più facile imparare ad ubbidire che ad comandare Et perchè la vostra città et voi havete ad essere quelli che militiate ad cavallo et comandiate, non si poteva cominciare da voi, per essere questa parte più difficile , ma bisognava cominciare da chi ha ad ubbidire et militare ad piè, et questo è el contado vostro. Nè parse pigliare el distrecto, anchora che in quello si possa introdurre militia ad piè, perchè non sarebbe suto securo partito per la città vostra, maxime in quelli luoghi del distrecto dove sieno nidi grossi, dove una provincia possa far testa ; perchè li humori di Toschana sono tali, che come uno conoscessi potere vivere sopra di sè, non vorrebbe più padrone, trovandosi maxime lui armato, et il padrone disarmato · et però questo distrecto bisogna, o non lo ordinare mai all'armi, o indugiarsi ad hora che l' armi del contado vostro habbino preso piè, et sieno stimate.

[1] The original of this document is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case 1 n 78 It has not been given in any edition of the "Opere" , but was published in marriage pamphlets, first by Ghinassi, then, with greater accuracy, by Professor D'Ancona.

perchè e' danari et el tempo si spenda utilmente, ci pare che non si spenda ad nessuno modo danari in quelli operai che voi giudicate disutili, così di quelli che si truovono costì, come di quelli vi venisseno per lo advenire. Et però potrete tali disutili licentiare, perchè vogliamo piuttosto habbiate 500 huomini che sieno buoni, che 1000, et che ve ne sia 500 inutili.

Vorremo, oltre ad di questo, che si pensasse come infinite volte si è decto, che quando pure el tempo sforzassi ad levarsi la opera restassi meglio et più perfecta che fussi possibile, il che ci parrebbe seguissi quando voi ordinassi in modo quello è facto, che tucto operassi qualche cosa. Et però vorremo che con sollecitudine si attendesse ad ridurre la pescaia in modo che la facessi qualche operatione, et che le piene la fermassino et facessino più forte, et così che si sboccassi ad ogni modo el secondo fosso. Et se non si potesse detto secondo fosso condurlo ad Arno tucto largo come e' fu cominciato, vi si conducessi con quella largheza si potessi, acciochè per qualche modo e' pigliassi le acque, et non havessi ad rimanere una buca in terra senza fructo Parrebbeci anchora che voi facessi la sboccatura di quel fosso fornito, largo almeno cento braccia, ritirando la largheza in verso dove havessi ad essere la bocca del secondo fosso; et se voi non potessi fare questa tale sboccatura quadra, la farete smussata, faccendo che el più largo fussi dalla parte del fosso fornito. Questa cosa ci parrebbe che dèssi la via più facilmente all' acqua, che non maggiore empito entrassi nel fosso, et togliesse facilità a' Pisani di chiudere la sboccatura, sendo largha Di nuovo vi si dice che noi desideriamo che l' opera si tirassi innanzi infino al fine, servendo el tempo. Ma perchè el tempo può guastarsi ad ogni hora, vorremo che si lavorasse in quello che facessi l' opera più utile, il che ci pare che sia il fermare la pescaia, sboccare *quomodocunque* el fosso secondo, et al fosso primo fare una sboccatura. Noi pensereno in questo mezo dove debbino andare cotesti huomini d' arme alle stanze, et te ne mandereno listra, acciochè, bisognando levarsi in un subito, tu sappi dove si habbino ad distribuire, et non segua disordine. Ma terrai questa cosa in te, acciochè, sappiendosi pet il campo, e' non cominciassino a levarsi prima che tu non ordinassi o che non fussi el desiderio nostro. Et perchè tu ci scrivi che il sig. Marcantonio desiderrebbe essere alloggiato in Maremma, potrai nel discorso del parlare dirli, come tu credevi che si fussi pensato qui, per honore della sua persona; et per riputatione delle cose nostre costà, di alloggiare la persona sua et li cavalli leggieri in Cascina, do le genti sue d' armi ne' luoghi convicini et commodi.

Intendiamo oltre ad di questo quello tu scrivi delle castagne, el quali noi desiderreno tòrre ad li Pisani ad ogni modo; et però vorremo pensassi ad questa cosa, et ci scrivessi el modo come ti paressi da procedere, et se andandovi con una scorta grossa et con li huomini del paese ad ritorle, e' bastassi. Communicherai questa ad Giuliano Lapi.

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ordinamente; ma le non possono stare più così, perchè e' bisogna, o che la 'mpresa ruini, o che la facci disordine; perchè, sanza dare loro capo et guida, non si può reggiere contro alli inimici che la ha. El capo che bisogna dare loro, è fare una leggie che ne dispongha, et uno magistrato che l' observi; et in questa leggie bisogna provvedere ad questo, che li scripti stieno bene ordinati, che non possino nuocere, et che si remunerino. Ad tenerli ordinati, bisogna che questo magistrato habbi autorità di punirli, et facultà da farlo, et che la leggie lo necessiti ad fare tucto quello che è in substantia della cosa, et che, stralasciandola, le facessi danno; et però bisogna constringerlo ad tenerne armati un numero, almeno ad tenere le bandiere; et e' connestaboli ad provvedere all' armi, ad far fare loro le mostre et vicitarli, ad rivederne ogniunno cento, et cancellare in certi dì et in certo tempo, et rimetterli, ad mescolarvi qualche cosa di religione per farli più ubbidienti. Quanto ad ordinare che non possino nuocere, si ha ad considerare che possono nuocere in dua modi: o fra loro, o contro alla città. Se fra loro, possono ferirsi l' uno l' altro, particularmente, o fare ragunate per fare male, come sogliono. Nel primo caso si vuole duplicare loro la pena, et maxime quelli che ferissino in su le mostre; ma ferendo altrove, si potrebbe observare le leggie vechie. Quando e' facessino ragunate in comuni, bisognerebbe fare ogni viva et grande demostratione contro ad chi ne fussi capo, et uno exemplo basta uno pezo nella memoria delli huomini. Contro alla città costoro possono fare male in questi modi: o con ribellarsi et adherirsi con uno forestiero, o essere male adoperati da uno magistrato o da una persona privata. Quanto ad lo adherirsi ad uno forestiero, li huomini ordinati nelli luoghi sopraddecti non lo possono fare, et non se ne debbe dubitare. Quanto allo essere male operati da uno magistrato, è necessario ordinare le cose in modo che conoschino più superiori. Et considerando in che articulo loro hanno ad riconoscere el superiore, mi pare che li habbino ad riconoscere chi li tenga ad casa ordinati, chi li comandi nella guerra, et chi li remuneri. Et perchè e' sarebbe periculoso che riconoscessino tucte queste autorità in uno solo superiore, sarebbe bene che questo magistrato nuovo li tenessi ordinati ad casa; e' Dieci dipoi li comandassino nella guerra; et e' Signori, Collegi, Dieci et nuovo magistrato li premiassi e remunerassi: et così verrebbono sempre ad havere in confuso el loro superiore, et riconoscere un pubblico et non un privato. Et perchè una moltitudine sanza capo non fecie mai male, o, se pure lo fa, è facile ad reprimerla, bisogna havere advertenza alli capi ad chi si dànno le bandiere in governo continuamente, che non piglino più autorità con loro si conviene; la quale possono pigliare in più modi, o per stare continuamente al governo di quelle, o per havere con loro interesse Et però bisogna provedere che nessuno natìo delli luoghi dove è una bandiera, o che vi habbi casa o possessione, là possa governare; ma si tolga gente di Casentino per il Mugiello, et per Casentino gente del Mugiello. Et perchè l' autorità con el tempo si piglia, è bene fare ogni anno le permute de' connestaboli, et dare loro nuovi governi, et dare loro divieto qualche anno da quelli governi primi; et quando tutte queste cose sieno bene ordinate et meglio observate, non è da dubitare. Quanto al premiarli, non è necessario ora pensarci; ma basterebbe solo darne autorità, come di sopra si dice, et dipoi venire a' premi di mano in mano, secondo e' meriti loro.

Quelli luoghi distrectuali che sono da non li armare, sono dove sono nidi grossi, come Arezo, Borgo ad San Sipolcro, Cortona, Volterra, Pistoia, Colle, Sangimigniano: li altri dove sono più castella simili, come la Romagna, Lunigiana, etc., non importono molto, perchè non riconoscono altro padrone che Firenze, nè hanno particulare superiore come interviene nel contado vostro; perchè el Casentino, Valdarno di sotto et di sopra, Mugiello, etc, ancora che sieno pieni di huomini, *tamen* non hanno dove fare testa, se non ad Firenze; nè più castella possono convenire ad fare una impresa. Et però si è cominciata questa Ordinanza nel contado, dove, volendola ordinare, bisognava darle ordine et modo, cioè segni sotto chi e' militassino, armi con che si havessino ad armare; terminare chi havessi ad militare sotto ciascuno segno, et dare loro capi che li exercitassino. Quanto alle armi, quelle che sono date loro sono note: quanto a' segni, è parso che le sieno bandiere tucte con uno segno medesimo del Lione, ad ciò che tucti li huomini vostri sieno affectionati di una medesima cosa, et non habbino altro per obiecto che 'l segno publico, et per questo ne diventino partigiani; sonsì distinti e' capi ad ciò che ciascuno riconosca la sua: sonsi numerate, perchè la città ne possa tener conto, et comandarle più facilmente. Era necessario dare ad queste bandiere termine di paese; et ad questo bisognava, o terminare el paese vostro di nuovo, o pigliare de' termini suoi antiqui; et perchè e' si truova diviso in Capitaneati, Vicariati, Potesterie, Comuni et Populi, parve, volendo andare con uno di questi ordini, da terminare queste bandiere con le Potesterie, sendo li altri termini o troppi larghi, o troppo strecti. Et però si è dato ad ogni Potesteria una bandiera; et ad dua, tre, quattro et cinqua bandiere si è dato uno conestabole che li struisca, secondo la commodità del ragunarli, et secondo la moltitudine delli uomini descripti sotto tali bandiere; tanto che trenta bandiere che voi havete, sono in governo d' undici connestaboli; et li luoghi dove le sono messe, sono Mugiello, Firenzuola, Casentino, Valdarno di sopra et di sotto, Pescia et Lunigiana. Pareva bene, anchora non si sia facto, scrivere sotto ogni bandiera, cioè in ogni Potesteria, più huomini si poteva, perchè, come dixe messer Hercole in uno suo scripto, questo ordine vi ha ad servire sempre in reputatione, et qualche volta in fatto; nè può servirvi in reputatione poco numero di huomini; nè *etiam*, in facto, del poco numero di huomini, quando pure bisognassi, si può trarre lo assai, ma sì bene dello assai, el poco. Nè impedisce cosa alcuna el tenere ordinati ne' paesi assai huomini, non li obbligando ad fare più che 12 o 16 monstre lo anno, et dando loro libera licentia d' andare dove vogliono ad fare e' facti loro Et però el tenerne ordinati assai è più prudentia, con animo di non havere poi adoperare, nè levare da casa chi ha honesta cagione di starvi, o chi si conoscessi inutile. Et così alla reputatione ti giova el numero grande, al facto el numero minore e buono; perchè sempre si potrà farne nuova scielta et meglio, havendogli visti più volte in viso, che non li havendo visti.

Voi dunque vi trovate scripti ne' sopra scripti luoghi, et sotto 30 bandiere et undici connestaboli, più che cinquemila huomini; havetene facto mostra in Firenze di 1200;[1] et sono procedute le cose, sendo nuove, assai

[1] Here the manuscript has these words, afterwards scratched out: *Et ne havete mandati già cinquecento in campo.*



Questo ordine bene ordinato nel contado, de necessità conviene che entri ad poco ad poco nella città, et sarà facilissima cosa ad introdurlo. Et vi advedrete anchora a' vostri dì, che differentia è havere de' vostri cittadini soldati per electione et non per corruptione, come havete al presente, perchè se alcuno non ha voluto ubbidire al padre, allevatosi su per li bordelli, diverrà soldato ; ma uscendo dalle squole honeste et dalle buone educationi, potranno honorare sè et la patria loro . et il tucto sta nel cominciare addare reputatione ad questo exercitio, il che conviene si faccia di necessità, fermando bene questi ordini nel contado, et che sono cominciati.[1]

[1] The MS finished with *contado;* then follow two erasures ; then *et che sono comincìati*

On the cover are the following words in Machiavelli's hand : "1512 La cagione della Ordinanza, dove la si trovi, et quel che bisogni fare. *Post res perditas.*" It is plain that these words were written at a later date, namely, after the fall of the Republic.

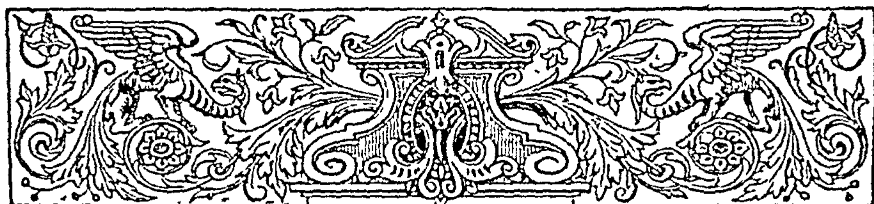


LIFE AND TIMES

OF

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.

VOLUME II.



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now demanded forty instead of thirty thousand ducats per annum, and not obtaining them, prepared a descent into Italy to the help of the Pope. By means of his agents, his Holiness had for some time been labouring to that end, and as early as the October of 1511, on hearing that the King boasted of still having the Swiss in his service, he had answered that his Majesty "lied in his throat, and would certainly never have them"[1] In fact, the King had deceived himself, for, aware that the Swiss lacked both cavalry and guns, he thought they would neither dare to separate from him nor act on their own account. They, on the contrary, esteeming themselves the best infantry in the world, were persuaded that France, whose infantry was her weak point, could do nothing without their aid, much less venture to meet them in the open field.

Ten thousand Swiss then came down from the mountains, and waited the arrival of others to move against the French. This event made so great a stir in Italy, that Cardinal Soderini, who had been feigning illness to avoid obeying the papal summons to Rome, now hurried there, whereupon the Pope exclaimed "that the Swiss were good physicians for the French sickness, since they had completely cured Monsignore of Volterra."[2] But Gaston de Foix knew how to keep them at bay, by temporizing measures; and they retreated, although already sixteen thousand strong, without having done anything, and without any one comprehending the motive of their retreat. Possibly they had been once more bribed by French gold. In this contingency the Florentines used their best endeavours to remain neutral. To French demands for help, they replied that having already forwarded the promised three hundred men-at-arms, it was impossible for them to do more; and they despatched Messer Francesco Guicciardini as ambassador to Spain, since, although still under the legal age of thirty, he had already a high reputation for skill. But the instructions given to him were not definite enough to conciliate the Confederates; and thus Florence was still exposed to the serious danger of being equally detested by all parties.[3]

On the one side there were the French, now in much augmented numbers, and with a considerable force of German infantry; on the other were ranged Spain, Venice, and the Pope, who penned fiery letters to Cardinal dei Medici, declaring that he could not under-

[1] Letter from Bernardo da Bibbiena to Cardinal dei Medici, Legate in Romagna, 19th of October; 1511, Desjardins, *op. cit.*, vol ii pp 542, 543.

[2] Another letter from Bernardo da Bibbiena to Cardinal dei Medici, of 18th December, 1511.

[3] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol v p 64



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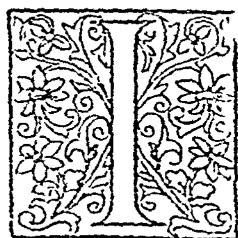
OF

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI.

CHAPTER XIV.

The battle of Ravenna—The French retreat—Dangers of the Republic—Machiavelli organizes the defence—Ordinance of the mounted militia—The Spaniards capture and pillage Prato—Riot in Florence in favour of the Medici—The Gonfalonier Soderini is deposed and leaves the city.

(1512)



N 1512 the French forces continued to pour into Italy, under the command of the very old but still renowned Captain G. J. Trivulzio, and of Gaston de Foix. The latter, barely twenty-three years of age, son of the King's sister and brother to the wife of Ferdinand the Catholic, now filled the post of governor of Milan, and was soon to astound the world by his military genius and valour. Trivulzio had already driven the Papal troops from the Duchy of Ferrara and restored the Bentivoglio to Bologna; but the army was not yet in a condition to take the field, and he was therefore awaiting reinforcements from France, where preparations were going on slowly. The King, with his usual parsimony, refused to increase the pay of the Swiss, who

forces, French, Italian, and German, to a total of 1,500 lances, 1,000 archers, 19,000 infantry, without including the artillery, which nearly all belonged to the Duke of Ferrara. The Spaniards numbered 14,000 lances and men-at-arms, 1,500 *ginetcs*, or mounted spearmen, 13,500 infantry, besides the artillery, and fifty scythed chariots, engines of war of a novel kind.[1]

The two armies remained encamped for some time, for the confederate troops shrank from an encounter with the enemy's superior forces. But Gaston de Foix had no time to lose, for the English were threatening attack upon France, and that shifty ally of Louis XII., the Emperor, was threatening to recall his 6,000 Germans. So, in order to compel his retreating enemy to take the field, the young commander, after capturing several strongholds, assaulted Ravenna. And this was too important a city to be given up to him without the most desperate resistance. In fact Marcantonio Colonna had undertaken its defence, and been solemnly assured that the whole force of the Confederates should come to his aid, were the city in danger. Gaston de Foix took up his position between the rivers Ronco and Montone, which streams almost meet near the walls of Ravenna. His guns planted, he opened a breach and gave the signal for assault; but the defence was so desperate, that after a loss of three hundred foot soldiers and a few men-at-arms, with as many more wounded, he was compelled to retreat within his entrenchments. The following day the citizens sent to the French camp to negotiate terms of surrender, without the knowledge of Marcantonio Colonna, who, in the certainty of receiving succour, was preparing to continue the defence.[2] Indeed, before long, the army of the Confederates came in sight, and the Duke of Nemours and Gaston de Foix immediately gave the signal of attack. Their eagerness for a pitched battle was now hotter than ever, in consequence of the arrival of a despatch from the Emperor, recalling his troops, the which news could only be kept concealed for the moment.

The army of the Confederates marched between the two torrents until near Forlì, and then, crossing the Ronco, halted at three miles from Ravenna. At this point, having the river on their left, they worked day and night, in order, according to Pedro Navarro's plan, to dig a trench protecting them on the right and

[1] These are the figures given by Francesco Pandolfini, Florentine Orator to Gaston de Foix (Desjardins, *op cit.*, vol. ii. p 581 and fol). Those given by Buonaccorsi and by Guicciardini, in his "Storia d'Italia," are somewhat different, and not even concordant with each other; while, again, different figures are given by Jacopo Guicciardini in one of his letters from Florence, to his brother Francesco, then in Spain. See Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. vi p 36 and fol.

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 28.

stand why they had not begun to fight, why they had not already attacked Bologna. The Confederates were near Imola with an army numbering, between Spanish and Papal troops, 16,000 foot and 2,400 horse, commanded by the Viceroy Raimondo de Cardona, Pedro Navarro, Prospero and Marcantonio Colonna, and others The French had garrisoned Bologna with no more than 2,000 German foot soldiers and 200 lances; so the enemy began the attack, and by means of mines laid by Navarro, who was a very renowned engineer, blew up a piece of the wall. But the fragment in its fall again closed the breach, in an apparently miraculous manner And almost at the same time Gaston de Foix, who had already reinforced the garrison with another thousand foot soldiers and 180 lances, marched his whole army into the city, on the 4th of February This army, according to Guicciardini, amounted to 1,300 lances, and 14,000 infantry, Italian, Spanish, and German.[1] On learning this, the Confederates raised the siege and withdrew. They were not pursued, for Gaston, knowing that the Venetians had taken possession of Brescia, immediately started in that direction on the 9th February, leaving only 300 lances and 4,000 infantry within the walls of Bologna.[2] By the way he fell in with a detachment. of the Venetian army, and routed it; he then attacked Brescia, where the castle was still holding out for him. The 19th he captured the city, after a fierce assault, and a most obstinate defence on the part of the Venetian force This army although consisting of 8,000 foot soldiers, 500 men-at-arms, and 800 light horse, was almost entirely annihilated. Some reckon 8,000, others as many as 14,000 dead, between soldiers and citizens. Unfortunate Brescia was subjected to about a whole week of continuous sack and pillage, for Gaston, whose cruelty was as great as his courage, had given full license to his soldiery. At the end of that period his host, which had suffered very little, was loaded with spoil, and, full of daring, and being remarshalled under its banners, was again marched towards Romagna. At a time when armies were handled with the utmost slowness, Gaston de Foix had accomplished positive miracle. In the space of fifteen days he had raised the siege of Bologna repulsed a detachment of the enemy on the march, attacked and captured Brescia, and was now ready for greater enterprises. On reaching Finale, he found fresh reinforcements, increasing his

[1] "Storia d'Italia," vol v. pp. 74–5. This is the total of the forces introduced into the city at different times. In fact, Buonaccorsi, whom Guicciardini continually copies, says, that before entering Bologna, Gaston had 800 lances and 10,000 men. "Diario," p. 166. Thus, counting those already in the city, we arrive at about the same total recorded by Guicciardini.

[2] Buonaccorsi says. 250 lances and 2,000 infantry.

at the pace of conquerors, determined to rout them by a last furious charge, and led forward his cavalry in person. Unfortunately his horse fell wounded under him, and he perished from fifteen or sixteen wounds, all in his face and chest. He was barely twenty-three years of age, and in three months had won enduring renown ; a general almost before he was a soldier. Therefore his death in the very hour of victory was an irreparable calamity for France. The Confederates retreated with much coolness, although thoroughly defeated along the whole line. All their baggage waggons, their flags, and artillery, remained in the enemy's hands, together with a large number of prisoners, including Fabrizio Colonna, Pedro Navarro, the Marquises of Palude, Bitonto, Pescara, and Cardinal dei Medici, the Papal Legate. The list of dead was, as usual, reckoned at different figures, some writers fixing the number at 10,000, some even at 20,000. It may be reckoned in round numbers that the Confederate loss was 12,000, the French only 4,000. Nevertheless the latter, besides losing several captains like Ives d'Alègre and his son, had to lament the death of Gaston de Foix, and this, as they soon discovered, cost them more than a defeat. However, for a few days they enjoyed the fruits of their victory: Ravenna was taken and pillaged, and Imola, Forlì, and Cesena speedily surrendered to them.[1]

The news of the French successes, and of the capitulated cities, threw the Pope into the greatest consternation, so that he longed to make peace at any price. But the Spaniards persuaded him to wait, and on seeing the different turn things were taking, he feigned still to desire peace, the better to outwit his enemies, who were, indeed, quickly reduced to desperate straits. The Emperor again sent orders of recall to his troops ; the Swiss were at last really on the march to the aid of the Confederates, and were soon in Italy 20,000 strong ; while England was sending soldiers to Spain to attack France. In short, so entirely had public feeling changed, that all were sounding the praises of the Empire, and

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v pp 93–113, bk. x. ch. iv. This author says that 10,000 men were killed in the battle of *Ravenna* (p. 110). On the other hand, Buonaccorsi ("Diario," p. 174) reckons the killed at 4,000 French and 12,000 Confederates Piero Guicciardini, writing to his son in Spain, on the 30th of April, 1512, says that the total loss amounted to 16,000, of whom one-third were French. Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. vi. p. 47. Jacopo, on the contrary, wrote to his brother (ibidem, p 36 and fol.) that according to some there were 12,000 dead, of whom a third were French, and according to others, 20,000. Francesco Pandolfini, *Florentine Ambassador to Gaston de Foix, reports*, like Buonaccorsi, that the French had 4,000 dead, the Spaniards, 12,000 Desjardins, "Négociations," &c., vol. ii p. 581. It is very probable that Buonaccorsi took his figures from Pandolfini's official despatch.

in front, but leaving an open space, about twelve yards in breadth by which they could push forward their cavalry, and then, if required, the entire army, headed by the artillery and the fifty scythed cars (*carri falcati*) mentioned above. These cars had been invented by Navarro in imitation of ancient engines of war: they were small and low, and armed with a huge double spear, with a space of about a yard and a half between its forks In the centre was a long lance, protruding at the same angle, and dealing its blows before those of the spears; each of these cars was also provided with a small cannon. They were easily manœuvred, and considered a wonderful invention, but proved of very little service, and were quickly superseded by artillery.[1]

The French left Ives d'Alègre stationed near Ravenna with 400 lances, and having thrown a bridge over the Ronco, also crossed that river. This took place on the 11th of April, 1512: thus the great battle was fought upon Easter Day. They formed in a crescent, with the artillery under the Duke of Ferrara planted on their right wing, so that their guns played on the Spanish cavalry, led by Fabrizio Colonna and posted near the river, to the left of their own army.

When the fire began, and Colonna perceived that his men were unable to deploy, and decimated by the enemy's shots, he was furious against Navarro for having thus wedged them within the camp, and declared him a traitor urged by jealousy towards himself. At last, no longer able to restrain his impatience, he gave the word of command to his men and sallied from the entrenchments. And as the whole army followed him, this was the real beginning of a battle more terrible than any other in the memory of man: it was in short the first great battle of modern times. The Confederates' cavalry having already, while motionless, suffered so severely from the enemy's fire, could ill withstand the onslaught of the French men-at-arms, so renowned for dash and valour, and was speedily routed by them, leaving Fabrizio Colonna himself and the Marquis of Pescara prisoners in their hands. The Spanish infantry justified its high reputation, by the wonderful energy with which it repulsed the enemy's attacks, but at last it gave way, borne down by the French men-at-arms, the military genius of their leaders, and also by the overwhelming superiority of numbers. In a short time the whole Spanish army was in retreat; but in such good order and steady form, that Gaston de Foix, enraged by the spectacle of beaten foes retreating almost

[1] Letter of Jacopo Guicciardini to his brother. Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. vi. p. 41. Report of the Ambassador Francesco Pandolfini on the battle of Ravenna, Desjardins, *op. cit.*, vol. ii p 584.

mised much heavier sums to the army that should escort them back to their native city. Giuliano dei Medici, who carried on the negotiations in his own name and that of his brother, Cardinal Giovanni, was listened to as though he were already the representative of a power, while no one paid attention or addressed a syllable to the ambassador, Giovan Vittorio Soderini, who sat there unable to make any counter-proposal in the name of the Republic. It had been already decided to reinstate Massimiliano Sforza, son of Lodovico il Moro, in the Dukedom of Milan, to expel the Gonfalonier Soderini from Florence and recall the Medici; already for this purpose the Viceroy had joined his army in Bologna, and yet neither the Florentines nor their Ambassador had the least inkling of these proceedings

Soderini felt that the ground was giving way under his feet and was day by day reduced to more manifest impotence. For he saw himself forsaken by the most influential men in Florence, who openly favoured the Medici, were in continual correspondence with them and were plotting their return. All these men were moved by their old-standing jealousy of Soderini, who, as they thought, had done wrong to leave them on one side. They did not desire the positive destruction of the Republic, but they hoped to hold its government in their own grasp, and become, as it were, guardians of the Medici (who professed themselves content to return as private citizens); while insisting, in order to keep them in subjection, on the aid of the people, who were always in favour of a free form of government. The Gonfalonier lacked the energy for a vigorous and desperate resistance, but neither did he give up all for lost. He listened attentively to the words of the Spanish Orators, who gave him to understand that their monarch would never consent to yield excessive power to the Pope, much less to resign Florence into the hands of a Cardinal like Giovanni dei Medici, the actual head of the family. He also lent ear to the Pope, who sent him word that he hated the Spaniards, meant to drive them from Italy and did not intend to give power to Cardinal dei Medici, their dependent. In this way Soderini was tricked on all sides and left in suspense.[1] Added to this, Machiavelli had inspired him with his own blind trust in the Militia Ordinance so soon to be put to a decisive test, and the hopes they both built on this trial were unfortunately doomed to complete overthrow.

In the last months of 1511 and the first of 1512, Machiavelli, leaving diplomacy on one side, had devoted his whole energy to the task of placing the Republic in a state of defence. There is

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," &c., pp. 289, 290

Cardinal dei Medici, being carried a prisoner to Lombardy, was daily surrounded by a crowd of French soldiers begging him for absolution. Shortly afterwards he regained his liberty by a sudden rescue. The Confederates joined the Swiss in pursuit of the French, who, to use the words of a contemporary writer, "were flying like mist before the wind."[1] In a short space their Italian possessions had dwindled to the towns of Brescia, Crema, and Legnago, the fortress and lighthouse of Genoa and the castle of Milan. At the same time Parma, Piacenza, Bologna and other places in Romagna surrendered to the Pope, who assumed possession of them puffed with vainglory and mighty hopes. It seemed all a dream.

The Florentines were now at a sad pass. Faithful to the last to the French alliance, at the expiration of the treaty binding them to provide 300 lances, they hastened to renew it for five years longer, pledging themselves to contribute 400. But meanwhile the 300 men already with the French were being plundered. King Louis XII. was not at all satisfied with the conduct of the Florentines, almost asserting that they had betrayed him, whereas they were considered his most faithful friends by the Confederates, who, although at odds on most points, were unanimous in determining to no longer tolerate the government of Soderini in Florence. Yet they all dragged the Republic in different directions, until it knew not what course to take. The Pope sent his Datary, Lorenzo Pucci, to invite the Republic to join the League with the obligation of furnishing a contingent to help in the total expulsion of the French from Italy. The Emperor's representative, Cardinal Gurgense, to whom Giovan Vittorio Soderini had been sent as envoy, counselled the Florentines to refuse all such proposals, suggesting that they should send money to his master instead, in order to gain his friendship and protection. And although the Florentines had already given gold to obtain that friendship upon which a price was again set, they would have consented to any sacrifice to secure peace; had they not been well aware that to satisfy the claims of the distant Emperor would by no means avail to free them from Spaniards or from their still nearer neighbour the Pope.

Accordingly they could arrive at no decision, and Cardinal Gurgense joined the other Confederate representatives at Mantua, where it was resolved to assist the Medici, who, without wasting time in words, immediately paid down 10,000 ducats, and pro-

[1] Francesco Vettori, "Sommario della Storia d'Italia dal 1511 al 1527," p. 287, published in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," Appendix xxii. Guicciardini, vol. v. p 143 and fol.

a paper of his that must have been written about this period, "Counsels on the choice of a Commander of the Infantry,"[1] and in this he recommends that the Eighty should elect a good captain for the militia, since without one, the troops could not stand trial with success. He suggested that the leader chosen should be Jacopo Savelli,[2] a man held in high esteem by A Giacomini and Niccolò Capponi, and superior to envy; but unfortunately his suggestion does not seem to have been adopted, and the militia remained without a commander.[3] In December, 1512, the Secretary had travelled through Tuscan Romagna raising levies for the cavalry that was shortly to be organized;[4] and then returned to Florence to continue his labours for that purpose.[5] Finally, in March, 1512, a decree was passed, first in the Council of Eighty and then in the Great Council, instituting the mounted militia, with a statute composed by himself. It ran to this effect: "Seeing the great utility of the Infantry Ordinance, desiring to ensure the safety of the present government and liberty amid the dangers to which they are now exposed, the Nine are hereby empowered to enlist under our banners for the entire year 1512, no less than 500 light horse, armed either with crossbows or matchlocks at the pleasure of the men; ten per cent. of the number may be armed with lances." In time of peace these soldiers were to have a fixed allowance for the keep of their horses, to be afterwards deducted from the considerably higher pay that they would receive in time of war, as the other light horse engaged by the Commune.[6] Also, this horse militia was to be composed of men enlisted in Florentine territory; yet even at this juncture, when the country was in danger, no one dared to invite any inhabitant of a large city, and much less of Florence, to join the corps. Who indeed could venture to advise that measure when the most

[1] "Consulto per l'elezione del comandante delle fanterie" ("Opere," vol. iv. p. 455).

[2] In every edition of the "Opere" we find only "*il Signor Jacopo*," without any surname. The Florentine edition of the "Opere Minori" (Le Monnier, 1852), gives in a note the supposition, likewise repeated in the Florentine edition of the entire works of Machiavelli, published in 1857, that the man referred to was Jacopo Savelli. The P. M edition of the "Opere" merely gives a note with the words "*Jacopo Corso*," without adding more (vol. vi. p. 358). But it is impossible to think that the man proposed by Machiavelli was any other than Jacopo Savelli, for both Christian and surname are to be found in the old copy of the "Consulto," preserved in a Codex of the Barberini Library in Rome See Cod. 47, lviii, at p. 152

[3] We find only the veteran Luca Savelli at the head of the men-at-arms.

[4] "Opere," vol. vii. pp 420, 421.

[5] "Scritti Inediti," published by Canestrini, p. 368 and fol.

[6] See the Provvisione in the "Opere," vol iv. p 447.

provided with guns. Arrived at the frontier, the representatives of the Republic demanded to know their intentions. They replied that they came to execute the decrees of the Confederates, namely, to depose Soderini, who had always been too friendly to France, to establish a government in which they could place confidence and to reinstate the Medici as private citizens. The Viceroy also demanded a considerable sum of money: according to Buonaccorsi, 100,000 ducats The same requests were renewed at Barberino. It is certain, that at this juncture, an arrangement might have been concluded by giving the money and allowing the return of the Medici. But the Gonfalonier, always of irresolute temper, foresaw that, once in Florence, the Medici would assume the mastery, and drive him away by changing the government. Besides, he thought his forces sufficient to resist so small an army as that of the Viceroy.

Both he and Machiavelli were deceived upon this point, and the latter, with exaggerated confidence in the militia, continued to direct the defence, without taking alarm on seeing that while he fortified one place, the enemy quietly slipped through another, because he had settled to make a stand against them at Prato. Therefore Guicciardini was right in saying that the Florentines "had few men-at-arms; no infantry save those collected at random, or enlisted in their militia (the majority of whom lacked all experience of war); that they had no excellent captain, in whose merit or influence they could put their trust; while, as for the other leaders, they were of such sort, that never in the memory of man had there existed any less worthy of their pay."[1]

Nevertheless, the Gonfalonier seemed resolved to act with energy. He imprisoned twenty-five of the more suspected citizens, and then assembling the Great Council, delivered a lengthy speech explaining the real state of affairs He declared himself ready to resign his office, if that was the wish of his fellow citizens; but he begged them to reflect that his expulsion would fail to conciliate his enemies, because they really desired to change the government, and the Medici, sooner or later, would destroy liberty and take their revenge. If, however, the city would join with him and support him, he was prepared to make a vigorous defence, so long as the citizens were willing to make the necessary sacrifices. His speech was eloquent, and had a great effect, and the citizens, assembling in benches (*nelle pancate*) according to custom, declared unanimously for the maintenance of the popular government and the defence of their liberties.[2]

[1] "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 152.

[2] Soderini's speech is given in Guicciardini's "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 157.

evidently altered the figures and attenuated, in a sense favourable to the Medici, the facts gleaned from Buonaccorsi and by letters sent to him from Florence, which being now published in the "Opere Inedite" can be read by all the world. Among other things, he pretends that Cardinal Giovanni put a stop to the slaughter and saved the women, which is more than the Cardinal himself said in his letter to the Pope According to Modesti's narrative, it was only after some days that he saved the women, who had taken refuge in his palace, "in what state may be imagined."[1] The slaughter was certainly enormous, as all contemporaneous writers declare, and as the Cardinal allows in his letter; and besides the slaughter, violence was done to the honour of the women.

> "Qui ogni monasterio é saccheggiato
> Qui ogni chiesa s'usa per bordello.
> Di meretrice che loro han menato
> Qui non giova a sirocchie aver fratello."[2]

So ran the doggerel verses of a contemporary chronicler, and all writers repeated the same thing. Nardi tells us of a young girl who threw herself out of a window to preserve her honour, and of a woman carried off by a Spaniard and kept as his mistress for some years, until at last she succeeded in cutting his throat and making her escape. She then came back to her husband at Prato, where she received a triumphant welcome, and was compared to Judith[3] and to the most illustrious matrons of ancient Rome. It was said that among the few slain on the enemy's side, several circumcised corpses were found; hence the assertion that even Mussulmans were comprised in the Spanish army, and that this not only explained their atrocious cruelty, but also their monstrous contempt for Christian churches and religious houses.[4]

It was not surprising that the Viceroy should now increase his pretensions. Although at first he had gone so far as to say that he consented to leave the Gonfalonier Soderini in the city, and had held his tongue as to the Medici, he now declared his intention of reinstating them, of changing the government, and likewise demanded an immediate payment of 150,000 ducats.[5] Florence could no longer refuse anything, and was disposed to accept any terms; but so great was the general panic, the disorder and the confusion, that it was impossible to come to any determination.

[1] "Archivio Storico," vol i. p 243.
[2] *Ibid.*, vol. i. p. 266.
[3] Nardi, "Storia," vol ii p. 18.
[4] *Ibid.*, vol. i. pp. 493, 494.
[5] *Ibid.* vol. i p 495.

the Viceroy had arrived before the town with 5,000 Spanish infantry and 200 men-at-arms, but with no artillery save the two pieces brought by Cardinal dei Medici, who followed the camp. The army was starving, unpaid, and without supplies of any kind, but it was composed of men who had served in the battle of Ravenna. And these were the opponents of Machiavelli's raw militia, who had never smelt powder. Now, indeed, the Ordinance was to be put to the proof.

The Spaniards' first attack failed for want of artillery, and the Viceroy, being in need of supplies, declared his readiness to enter into negotiations, provided Florence would receive back the Medici, immediately pay him 3,000 ducats, and also forward at once 100 loads of bread to relieve the hunger of his troops. Whether these proposals were sincere or not, many Florentines wished to accept them; but the Gonfalonier's hesitation allowed the favourable moment to escape, whereupon the Viceroy, having entered Campi by stratagem, and found provisions there, renewed the attack on the walls of Prato from another point. One of his two guns burst, the other did little execution, but at last he contrived to open a breach.[1] Then the assault was given. While some resistance was kept up at the two gates, the militia, charged with the defence of the breach, immediately gave way, flying like sheep. So on the 29th of August, 1512, at the 16th hour, the Spaniards entered Prato, and meeting with no resistance, began to pillage the town[2] The number of killed during the sack is variously computed. Jacopo Guicciardini fixes it at 4,000, chiefly soldiers of the Militia Ordinance, who were nearly all exterminated, and he adds, "that the women were insulted and held at ransom, and all the monasteries turned into brothels." Other writers, like Modesti and Cambi, reckon the dead to be 5,000, while Francesco Guicciardini reduces the number to 2,000. The latter, however,

[1] Buonaccorsi, "Diario," pp. 181, 182; Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v p. 158 and fol.; Nardi, "Storia," vol. i pp. 487-90.

[2] Buonaccorsi, at p. 182, says: "on the 30th of August, at seventeen o'clock;" Modesti ("Archivio Storico," vol i. p. 238), says: "the 29th of August, at eighteen o'clock;" and Jacopo Guicciardini, in the letter to his brother, also repeats that the Spaniards entered the town on the 29th; but Vettori, at p. 291 of his "Sommario," says "the 24th of August." Cardinal dei Medici, in a letter to the Pope, dated 29th of August, 1512, and of which a summary is given in Sanuto ("Diario," vol. xv. sheet 14, St Mark's Library in Venice), says. "This day . . . at sixteen of the clock, the town was sacked, not without some bloodshed, such as could not be avoided Within the walls were three thousand battalions" (that is, three thousand militia), "of whom there are very few survivors. Luca Savelli and his son have been taken. The taking of Prato, so speedily and cruelly, although it has given me pain, will at least have the good effect of serving as an example and a terror to the others"

Valori, with a troop of forty horse, escorted Soderini as far as Sienna. The ex-Gonfalonier then proposed going to Loreto; but hearing from his brother the Cardinal that his life would be in danger by the way, he went instead to Ragusa, and not feeling safe even there, took refuge in Castelnuovo, which was under Turkish rule Thus were overthrown the power and government of Piero Soderini, whom all impartial judges deemed an honest but very feeble politician. Even Francesco Vettori, who, as we have seen, joined his brother in compassing the Gonfalonier's fall, says that he was certainly "good and prudent and useful, that he never let himself be carried beyond the bounds of justice, either by ambition or avarice; but that evil fortune (I will not say his but that of the wretched city) prevented him and others from discovering any way to avert the insults of the confederated powers."[1] This is truly singular language on the part of one who had contributed to the return of the Medici; but precisely for that reason is highly credible. The historian Filippo dei Nerli, however, another zealous partisan of the Medici, expresses his views with greater sincerity. After blaming Soderini for not having sufficient consideration for the influential men who had aided him to rise, he concludes by saying that the Gonfalonier "never knew how to be either a bad or a good prince, and had too much belief that with patience, and—so the phrase runs—taking advantage of time, all difficulties could be overcome."[2] In point of fact this verdict differs but slightly from that expressed by Machiavelli, when he remarked in his "Discorsi," that Soderini "hoped by patience and goodness to extinguish evil humours; without ever daring to extinguish them by force, although his enemies gave him occasion to do so. He was accustomed to excuse himself by saying, that it would have been necessary to violate the laws, the which would have bred hatred, and endangered, at his own death, the perpetual government of any other Gonfalonier, although in his judgment this was a useful government for the city. Nevertheless, one must never let an evil run on for the sake of some good, when this good may easily be crushed by that evil"[3]

Meanwhile the band of young men who had expelled Soderini, together with others, "all of bad intentions,"[4] assumed the guard

Jacopo Salviati and Paolo Vettori had come as ambassadors to them, and that on the same day, at 16 o'clock, Soderini had been deposed by the Signoria and the Consiglio Grande. See Appendix (II) of Italian edition, document xii.

[1] "Sommario," p. 289

[2] Filippo dei Nerli, "Commentarii," &c., p. 110.

[3] "Discorsi," bk. iii. ch. iii.; in the "Opere," vol iii. p. 310.

[4] See the previously quoted letter of Jacopo Guicciardini

Even the city's own soldiery became objects of fear, for so greedy did they appear of plunder and license, that although they were encamped outside the walls, the women of Florence were beginning to fly to the convents for refuge.[1]

The government of the Republic seemed already in the hands of the Medici. Cardinal Giovanni was in constant correspondence with the leading citizens, and Giulio, his illegitimate cousin, had already held a secret interview with Anton Francesco degli Albizzi in a villa belonging to the latter, for the purpose of planning the *coup de main* that was to put an end to everything. In fact, on the 1st of August, Albizzi, Paolo Vettori, Gino Capponi, the sons of Bernardo Rucellai and Bartolommeo Valori, a kinsman of Soderini, all very resolute young men, broke into the Palace, where the new Signory was sitting, forced their way to the apartments of the Gonfalonier, and violently insisted on the instant liberation of the twenty-five Medicean partisans he had recently imprisoned. They then threatened his life, if he would not resign office, but promised him safety if he would quietly take himself away.[2] Convinced of the inutility of any farther resistance, the Gonfalonier declared his readiness to yield, and having sent for Machiavelli, the only man in whom he could trust at this time of mortal danger, he despatched him to Francesco Vettori, the brother of Paul, to implore shelter in one of their houses, where he hoped to find greater safety than in his own. Francesco Vettori consented, after having been first assured by his friends that no violence would be used.[3] And directly afterwards, he, who although the friend of Soderini and Machiavelli, was working with his relatives to ensure the Medici's triumph, was summoned to the new Signory, so that, by assembling the magistrates, at least some apparent show of legality should accompany the change of government, now in rapid course of accomplishment. The legal number of magistrates and counsellors being in some fashion got together, they refused consent to the Gonfalonier's deposition Upon this Vettori, who played a double part in the comedy, besought them with imploring gestures to decide on this step; since otherwise the young men who had already virtually deposed Soderini, would immediately rush to take his life. And in this way the object was gained.[4] After this, he and Bartolommeo

[1] Letter of Jacopo Guicciardini previously quoted.

[2] Nardi, "Storia," vol ii. p. 13, and almost all other contemporary historians.

[3] This incident is recorded by Vettori himself in his "Sommario," p. 292, and has been also confirmed by others

[4] Nardi, "Storie." vol. i. p. 498 On the last day of August, the Cardinal and Giuliano dei Medici wrote from Prato to Pietro da Bibbiena in Venice, that



CHAPTER XV.

Return of the Medici to Florence, 1512—New form of government—Persecutions—Writings addressed by Machiavelli to the Medici—He is deprived of all his offices—Death of Julius II.—Election of Leo X.—Conspiracy and death of Pietro Paolo Boscoli and Agostino Capponi—Machiavelli is accused of complicity in the plot—He is imprisoned, put to the question, and afterwards released—His sonnets.

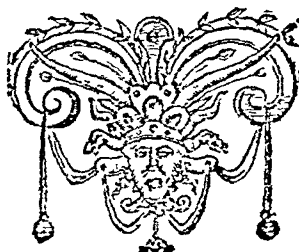
(1512–1513)



THE Medici family were now represented by Cardinal Giovanni (1475–1521), its chief and leading spirit, afterwards renowned under the name of Pope Leo X., and by Giuliano (1479–1516), both brothers to Piero who was drowned in the Garigliano, and sons of Lorenzo the Magnificent. Lorenzo had been accustomed to say that he had three sons, of whom the first (Piero) was mad, the second (Giovanni) wise, and the third (Giuliano) good. That Piero was vain, childish and ambitious, we have already seen; as to the Cardinal, he was keen witted and skilled in the conduct of affairs, an intelligent and faithful follower of the old Medicean policy; while in conclusion Giuliano was fantastic, ambitious, and gentle at the same time. Third in order, but still a very influential member of the family, came Giulio (1478–1534), Knight of Rhodes, Prior of Capua, later Bishop, Cardinal, and then Pope Clement VII. He was a natural son of Giuliano, the younger brother of Lorenzo the Magnificent, who had perished in the conspiracy of the Pazzi in 1478. There were also two boys: a son of Piero, named Lorenzo (1492–1519), afterwards Duke of

of the Palace, and twenty citizens were speedily elected to delibe rate on what was to be done A few still hoped to find some way of preserving liberty;[1] but meanwhile, events followed their inevitable course. The Orators despatched to the Viceroy and the Cardinal were received by the latter with courteousness and modesty. It was enough for him, he said, to be received in Florence with his kindred as private citizens, and permitted to re-acquire their possessions by payment. And truly no more honest request could be imagined on the part of one who had just triumphed by force of arms. But the Cardinal, as a guarantee for these modest demands, for his personal safety and that of his friends, also insisted on pledges; which evoked from the historian Nardi the just observation, that "he who demands freedom from molestation, wishing to live peaceably in the Republic, and desires pledges to that effect, does in fact bargain for and desire liberty to molest others."[2] In the meantime the Florentines were compelled to join the league; to bind themselves to the payment of 40,000 ducats to the Emperor, of 80,000 to the army that had defeated them, and of 20,000 to the Viceroy himself. These sums, with other donations that had to be made, raised the total amount to 150,000 ducats. They were also pledged to engage 200 Spanish men-at-arms.[3]

[1] See the previously quoted letter of Jacopo Guicciardini.
[2] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii p. 4.
[3] Ibid., vol ii. p. 17; Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 152 and fol.



expire, Giovan Battista Ridolfi was chosen Gonfalonier up to the end of October. He was related to the Medici, and held by many to be the leader of the *Ottimati;* nevertheless, he not only proved himself wise and courageous, but also friendly to liberty, which he seemed anxious to preserve. It was impossible that all love for the Republic should be at once extinguished in Florence, nor all the old aversion to the Medici swept away. The Medici were well aware of this, and therefore knew that it would be to their interest to proceed with great caution. Yet power was now in their grasp, events were turning more and more in their favour, and terror bent all to submission; so that it was impossible for them long to check their pace. Ridolfi himself soon perceived this. Soldiery and *condottieri* swaggered threateningly through the streets, and each day rumours were spread of new alterations in the government proposed by the Cardinal or the Spaniards. Thereupon certain citizens went to question the Gonfalonier, who replied: "What can we do? Do you not see that our enemies have put us in a closed barrel, and can easily attack us through the bunghole?"[1]

Disorder increased, and the blood-stained booty brought from Prato was openly sold on the Piazza, which added to the horror of those who still loved liberty. At last, on the 14th day of the month, the Cardinal marched in with 400 lances; he was followed by a body of 1,000 foot soldiers under Ranieri della Sassetta, Ramazzotto and other well-known captains of adventure, who had always remained faithful to the Medici.[2] The Cardinal was received with so much acclamation, that in writing to Pietro da Bibbiena in Venice, he said: "As regards this our expectation *fuit re ipsa longe superata.*"[3] The more decided of the Palleschi quickly gathered about him, and complained that the excessive goodness of Giuliano was allowing the fit moment for a radical change to slip by, and leaving things half done. No sooner had he entered the palace, where Giuliano was sitting in council with his friends, than there was a sudden incursion of numerous townspeople and soldiers, who, plundering the silver to the usual cry of "*Palle! Palle!*" demanded the convocation of a Parliament. This had always proved a sure mode of accomplishing by force all that was wished, while preserving a show of liberty.

In fact, on the 16th, a Parliament was assembled in the Piazza,

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii p. 4.

[2] Pitti, "Storia," in the "Archivio Storico," vol i p 103 and fol.

[3] This letter is of the 16th September, and is also included in Sanuto's "Diario," vol xv sheet 54*t*. See Appendix (II) of Ital ed., document xiv.

Urbino; and a natural son of Giuliano, named Ippolito (1511–1535), who afterwards became a cardinal. And with these two latter the main branch of the Medici was extinguished. At the moment of which we are now writing the stage was filled by Cardinal Giovanni, his brother Giuliano, and his illegitimate cousin Giulio.

Francesco degli Albizzi went to Prato, and on the 1st of September escorted Giuliano to his house in Florence, where he was speedily sought by his most faithful friends, among whom were the sons of Piero Guicciardini, and brothers of the historian, who was then in Spain as ambassador of the now fallen Republic. A great crowd speedily collected in the streets, and surged towards the Medici palace with loud cries of "*Palle! Palle!*" Bernardo da Bibbiena, secretary to the Cardinal, who that same day had hastily left Prato to come to Florence, tells us how, being unaware that Giuliano had gone to the Albizzi house, he went with the others to seek him at the old Medici palace in Via Larga, and as soon as he arrived there, was surrounded by an eager crowd who covered him with kisses and embraces, and asked him interminable questions.[1] Giuliano, to use the words of Pitti, immediately showed "a very peaceable and courteous mind" in Florence. He went about the streets in his *lucco* or hood, and without any attendant, almost like a plain citizen, and even shaved his beard to conciliate the Florentine taste.[2]

Soon the Viceroy arrived, was introduced to the Council by Paolo Vettori, and given the seat of the Gonfalonier, whence he made a speech in favour of the Medici. Immediately after this, a Pratica was assembled, to which Giuliano was also invited, in order to decide on the manner of constituting the government; and proposals were made—of a very temperate nature for those times—to which he gave his consent. They were to this effect: that the new Gonfalonier should be elected for one year, the number of the Council of Eighty increased, higher salaries given to the magistrates;[3] and as to the rest, it seemed that the old republican forms were to be retained. Meanwhile, in order to carry on affairs until the present Signory's term of office should

[1] Letter of Bernardo da Bibbiena to his brother Piero in Venice, dated Rome, 6th of September, 1512. It is included in the "Diarii" of Marin Sanuto, and we give it in Appendix (II.) of Ital ed., document xiii., because it not only describes the state of the city in those days, but even already speaks of the matrimonial negotiations begun by the Medici in order to give in marriage to Giuliano a niece of the Gonfalonier Soderini Events hurried on, and the negotiations were broken off; but, as will be seen later, they were afterwards resumed in another fashion.

[2] Pitti, "Storia," in the "Archivio Storico," vol. i. p. 103.

[3] Nardi, Buonaccorsi, Guicciardini.

new rulers. Even a certain Antonio Segni, whom Cardinal Soderini had hastily sent after his brother Piero, to warn him on the road that his life would be endangered should he fall in the Pope's hands, was put to such cruel torture in Rome as to die of its effects[1] A few dismissals and changes took place among the employés in the chanceries and other offices of the Republic; the militia was disbanded, to be replaced later by a ridiculous and ineffective imitation; and a loan of 80,000 ducats was levied on the citizens for the payment of the Spaniards. In the meantime the Viceroy, having received the first instalments of the money, and feeling sure of the rest, had left Florence and Prato ever since the 18th of September.

Thus ended the first period of the Florentine revolution. When it is remembered that one government had been destroyed to set up another; that the Medici, after eighteen years of exile, confiscation and persecution, had been restored by foreign arms, it must be allowed that, excepting the cruel and iniquitous sack of Prato, the work of the Spanish troops, they had behaved with praiseworthy moderation. They knew that their position in Florence could not long be maintained by revenge and violence; and accordingly began to try to win men's goodwill by favours, and gain over the people by festivities. To this end two societies were formed, the Society of the Diamond, so called from the crest of Giuliano its leader, the other, of the Big Branch,[2] from the crest of Piero dei Medici, father of Lorenzo, who was at the head of the second company. Both set to work at once, and when carnival came, began to give representations of various *Trionfi* or masquerades, among others that of the Golden Age. The verses sung in the streets on this occasion are to be found among the *Canti Carnescialeschi*, and were the compositions of Jacopo Nardi[3] This circumstance deserves notice, inasmuch as Nardi, even in the most difficult and dangerous moments, had always shown himself a sincere, constant, and unchanging Republican; one of the few at that period, on whose political honesty no slur was ever cast. His participation in the festivities inaugurated by the Medici in the months closely following their victory, clearly proves that their restoration met with an acceptance far more universal than has been imagined. They were now powerful in Italy, and it was expected that ere long their

[1] Letter of Pandolfo Conti to Francesco Guicciardini, published in the "Opere Inedite" of Guicciardini, vol. vi. p 145.

[2] Broncone in popular phrase.

[3] Nardi, "Storie," vol. ii. p 21; Vasari, "Vite," vol. xi. "Vita del Pontormo," p. 34 and fol., Le Monnier edition.

attended not only by the people, but by the soldiery and captains of the Medici, as well as of the Republic, the latter having nearly all deserted to the enemy, seduced by the magnificent promises held out to them; and a Balìa was immediately created of forty-five members, afterwards increased to sixty-six, all chosen by the Cardinal. This Balìa was charged at the special instance of the people, with the reform of the government. Reform was to consist in placing things on the same footing as before 1494. That is, while apparently restoring old Republican institutions, to restrict all actual, practical government in the hands of the Balìa This had been the method pursued by Cosimo and Lorenzo, when, while feigning to be private citizens, they had made themselves masters of the Republic; and this was the object now to be attained. In fact, notwithstanding the reforms effected and the older Republican institutions apparently recalled to life, the Balìa was the dominant power up to 1527. "In this way," so Guicciardini himself informs us, "the liberty of Florence was crushed by force"[1] And Francesco Vettori, an equally ardent partisan of the Medici, remarks: "The city was reduced to the point of doing nothing save by the will of Cardinal dei Medici; and this method is the method of perfect tyranny."[2]

Piero Soderini was instantly condemned to five years' exile in Ragusa, and his portrait was removed from the church of the Santissima Annunziata; Giovan Vittorio was exiled to Perugia for three years; and all the other Soderini, with the exception of the Cardinal, were relegated for two years to Naples, Rome, or Milan. Neither was Francesco Vettori forgiven for having escorted the ex-Gonfalonier and assisted in saving his life. Although Vettori had laboured so diligently for the Medici, although his brother Paolo had been one of the most daring ringleaders of the riot that had produced their recall, yet he was kept in prison for some time and several times stretched on the rack. Afterwards he passed a few days in retirement outside Florence, exclaiming: "This, then, is the reward of fidelity!"[3] but he soon regained the favour of the

[1] "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. p. 167. At this point the "Diario" of Buonaccorsi comes to an end, and Nardi at last admits, for the first and only time, that he had copied from him: "from whose most faithful writings we have derived a great part of these memoirs." "Storie," vol. ii p. 10. Let this serve to correct our too absolute assertion in the first part of this history (See note p. 258, vol. 1) that Nardi never quoted Buonaccorsi, but transcribed nearly the whole of his work.

[2] "Sommario," p. 293.

[3] Letter of Pandolfo Conti to Francesco Guicciardini, published in the "Opere Inedite" of Guicciardini, vol vi p. 145.

efface the infinite pain that I have endured." He then briefly records the advance of the Spaniards, the hesitation shown in the negotiations and conduct of the Gonfalonier, of whom he speaks with deference. When the Spaniards demanded his resignation, Soderini had replied, "that he had not attained his dignity either by stratagem or violence, but that it had been conferred upon him by the people; therefore should all the monarchs in the world join together to urge his deposition, he would never agree to it; but if it were the desire of the people he would instantly resign office. That, on the contrary, having consulted the will of the people, all had unanimously agreed to support him at the risk of their lives." He then alluded to the capture and sack of Prato, without entering into details, in order "not to cause the lady painful emotion." He mentions that it cost the lives of over four thousand persons, "without virgins being spared, nor consecrated places, these latter being given up by the Spaniards to sacrilege and slaughter. Yet even then the Gonfalonier remained undismayed, and showed himself ready to accept any terms from the Spaniards, save the return of the Medici, which was exactly what they insisted upon. Then all was lost; it was even feared that Florence might be sacked, after the cowardice shown at Prato by our soldiers." It must have been very bitter for Machiavelli to write these words, after the lofty hopes once entertained by him of the Florentine soldiery. He then goes on to relate with much brevity and little precision, all that occurred down to the meeting of the Parliament that reinstated the Medici in the possessions and dignities of their forefathers. "And this city is very tranquil, and hopes to lead, with their aid, no less honourable an existence than in past times, when their father, Lorenzo, of happy memory, was at the head of the government." [1]

In reading this letter it is requisite to bear in mind the style of language then used to potentates, and that employed by nearly all the Florentine Republicans, who in those days had occasion to address the Medici in writing, or even to mention them in conversation. But although such comparison will persuade us that Machiavelli's letter contained nothing that was strange or unusual in his time, it helps to prove that he was desirous to retain office, and had no repugnance, but rather an earnest wish, to serve under the Medici. No one blamed him for this, in those days, not even the ex-Gonfalonier, who was not long in coming to an arrangement with the Medici. In the same way, no one deemed that any blame attached to Marcello Virgilio, who filling a higher

[1] "Opere," vol. viii p. 23 and fol.

power would be farther augmented by the elevation of the Cardinal to the chair of St. Peter, and this expectation was soon verified. Neither, too, could it be denied that the Medici loved Florence, and Florentine hearts were beginning to feel a certain pride in the rising fortunes of the family. It was hoped that some shadow of Republican institutions would survive, that the most influential citizens would be summoned to share in the government, and that the times of Lorenzo the Magnificent were about to return. It is a fact, that after the Spaniards had gone, the new government needed no support from foreign soldiery, since even those who had been most devoted to Soderini made no attempt at open resistance. The only conspirators were a few young and inexperienced enthusiasts, whose plots failed for lack of followers, and who were left isolated and forsaken by every one. That was all! Even the ex-Gonfalonier, Soderini, as we shall see, not only soon came to terms with the Medici, but became connected with them. He returned to Rome, and lived there quietly to his death.

What, then, was Machiavelli's position, what were Machiavelli's thoughts during these difficult times? Faithful to Soderini to the very last, he still defended him; yet, to state the blunt truth, he still hoped and desired to retain his post. In the same way as most of the adherents of the fallen government, he was disposed to adapt himself to the new order of things. He also thought that some form of Republican government might be built up under the protection of the Medici, and for that reason was ready to be their faithful servant, and openly said so from the beginning. In testimony of this we have a letter, undated, but certainly written shortly after the 16th of September, addressed to a lady of unknown name, but evidently a friend if not a relation of the Medici, and possibly no less a person than Alfonsina Orsini, widow of Piero dei Medici.[1]

He begins the letter by saying that he will relate all that has recently happened, in order to fulfil the lady's request and because events have "redounded to the honour of your illustrious Excellency's friends and my *masters*, which two reasons serve to

[1] Many supposed this letter to be addressed to Caterina Sforza, but she was no longer living at that period; others, and among them Giuliano dei Ricci, who was in a position to know the truth, declare it to be addressed to Alfonsina Orsini. Nevertheless, there is a good deal of uncertainty on this point, for it is not easy to understand how the widow of Piero dei Medici could have wished Machiavelli to relate to her the deeds done in those days by her own friends and relations; and there are also certain expressions in the letter that give rise to doubts. More probably it was addressed to Clarice, daughter of Piero dei Medici, wife of Filippo Strozzi. She died in 1528.

they are the natural enemies; but they can come to terms either with this or that government, for the sake of achieving power. Consequently it is their aim, by gaining influence over the people, to become as it were patrons of the Medici. The Medici, therefore, should endeavour to separate them from the people, so that they may be compelled to throw themselves into their cause, as the only chance of safety."[1]

We do not know what induced Machiavelli to compose these three epistles. It is impossible for us to say whether he wrote them all by request, as he states in the first only; whether, availing himself of the office he still held, he put himself forward; or whether he composed them, as was usual enough in those days, merely as a vent for his opinions. This seems very credible in the case of the second and third letters which have come down to us in a somewhat sketchy and fragmentary condition. In whatever way these pressing counsels were offered or sought to be offered, their object is plain, as it is also plain that the method he had chosen was one of very doubtful success. Throughout his life Machiavelli, as all his works prove, had great faith in the people and an equally great distrust and antipathy for the aristocracy and every government in the hands of a few powerful and privileged men. He showed these sentiments even now in the hour of the Medicean victory, and wished to see the Medici confide in popular support, instead of becoming the tools of Soderini's enemies. But events were at the mercy of those who had prepared the way for them, and the Medici could not lean on the people who was adverse to them, and turn away from those who had effected their recall. Now these latter were the enemies of Soderini, and were no less hostile to his friend Machiavelli, whom they had no intention of allowing to retain his post. Thus, to struggle against them only served to heighten their enmity. Besides, although the magistracy of the Ten lingered on for some time longer, that of the Nine of the Militia had been immediately abolished, and as early as the 19th of September all the constables of the Militia Ordinance had received their dismissal.[2] Accordingly, while Marcello Virgilio, who was First Secretary of the Republic, but had taken no part

[1] This epistle was first given to the world by Signor Cesare Guasti, on the occasion of the Bongi-Ranalli marriage: under the title of "Ricordo di Niccolò Machiavelli ai Palleschi del" *1512*. Prato, Guasti Printing Press, 1868. The original manuscript is in the Florence Archives, and begins thus: "Notate bene questo scripto."

[2] Ammirato, "Storie Fiorentine," bk 29, commencement, vol. vi. p. 8, of the Florence edition, Batelli, *1849* Paoli, "*Priorista*" (pp 176, 177), in the appendix to the "Ricordi Storici" of Filippo Rinuccini, published by Aiazzi.

post than Machiavelli in the Chancery, not only kept it, but remained upon the best of terms with his new masters.

Nevertheless, it is certain that on account of his share in the defence of the city, if for no other reason, Machiavelli knew himself to be in a very difficult position, and accordingly did his best to ward off the storm. In these same days he wrote another letter addressed to Cardinal dei Medici, of which only a fragment has been preserved. "In the belief," he says, "that affection may serve as an excuse for presumption, I will venture to offer you a piece of advice. Already officials have been chosen to investigate the old possessions of the Medici and enforce their restitution. These estates are now in the hands of those who bought them and are their legitimate possessors; their seizure, therefore, will generate inextinguishable hatred, for men feel more grief at the loss of a farm than at the death of father or brother, every one knowing that no change of government can restore a kinsman to life, but that it may easily cause the restoration of a farm. Far better then would it be to make the Balìa vote an annual subsidy towards compensation for confiscated property. This is the record of my faithful convictions;" so the letter concludes, "and your Excellency will allow your prudence to decide."[1]

And again, in these last days, he addressed another epistle to the Medici, containing advice of a more general nature, and to a certain extent assuming the defence of Soderini. Those who were hostile to him because he had never called them to share in the government, and had accordingly plotted in favour of the Medici, now assailed him with accusations and slanders of every description. Machiavelli therefore remarked, that these were malicious stratagems, to curry favour with the new rulers and the people, whom they wished to impress with the belief that they had been induced to change the government solely from hatred of Soderini, whom for this reason they accused of being the author of every ill that had now befallen the city. "Thus, by gaining the popular favour, they seek to make themselves necessary to the new rulers, against whom they could at a given moment excite the whole mass of the citizens. Soderini is now out of Italy, and powerless therefore for good or for evil; the old and new governments are face to face, without hope of coming to a reconciliation. Those who have applied themselves to flattering the people and the Medici, could not exist with Soderini, of whom

[1] The original autograph of this fragment is in the Florence Archives and was published by Passerini in a Florentine journal; and afterwards reproduced in the edition of Machiavelli's works brought out by Usigli, Florence, 1857, see p 1146.

the Duchy, now much diminished, because every one had seized a morsel of it for himself. The Spaniards agreed to these arrangements; but the Venetians objected to them, being fiercely opposed to the cession of Vicenza and Verona to the Emperor, which only served to cement and strengthen his alliance with the Pope. The latter was at last indeed able to call himself content. It is true that instead of ridding Italy of barbarians, the land was now, thanks to him, a prey to Germans, Spaniards, and Swiss; yet he had driven out the French, dispersed the *Conciliabolo*, assembled the Lateran Council, extended and strengthened the temporal power of the Church, won reputation for his arms, and made Rome the centre not only of Italian, but almost of the world's affairs. But precisely at this moment he fell ill, and died on the 20th of February, 1513. Guicciardini says of him that he would have been worthy of great glory had he been a secular prince instead of Pope. It is certain that he was a man of great strength of mind, of stern resolve, and turned Italy and the whole world upside down; therefore all men now yearned for quieter times.

The conclave began its work animated by these sentiments, and on the 6th of March, Cardinal dei Medici was carried in on a litter, for he was suffering from an incurable fistula, which made it unpleasant to be in his company. An enemy of the French, who had always been fatal to his house, and raised to a lofty position by the deceased Pope, he was generous to prodigality, had the great gift of winning every one's liking, had enjoyed from his earliest youth the best literary training, was an enthusiast for the fine arts, a genuine Mæcenas, of mild and affable manners, and very prudent in his conduct. All these qualities seemed to indicate him, at this juncture, as the most fitting candidate for the papal throne, the only objection being his youth, since he was not yet forty. Nevertheless, there was a party of young cardinals in the conclave who were strongly in his favour. On the other hand, he had a decided opponent in Cardinal Soderini; but the latter's vote was purchased by the promise of recalling the ex-Gonfalonier from exile, of releasing the other members of the family from outlawry, and of giving the daughter of Giovan Vittorio Soderini in marriage to the youthful Lorenzo dei Medici [1] These arrangements made, Cardinal Giovanni was elected by a large majority on the 11th of March, and as he was not yet in priest's orders, but only a simple deacon, he had to be ordained before his

[1] Nerli, "Commentarii," pp 124, 125. The same things are recorded by other writers of the time.

in political affairs, remained in office, Machiavelli, by a decree of the Signory, unanimously passed on the 7th of November, 1512, was dismissed from every post he held: *cassaverunt, privaverunt et totaliter amoverunt.*[1] The same fate befell Buonaccorsi on the same day.[2] Besides this, a fresh decree sentenced Machiavelli to a year's banishment to a certain distance from Florence, but within Florentine territory and without permission to leave it. He was also to find sureties for the total sum of one thousand *lire*, to guarantee his submission to the sentence And on the 17th of November both he and Buonaccorsi were forbidden to cross the threshold of the Palace for a whole year, an order that in Machiavelli's case was several times provisionally rescinded,[3] because he had to render up the accounts of his administration, and supply all required explanations. All this he was able to do with such great and praiseworthy exactitude that his adversaries found no pretext for the slightest accusation or reproof. His post was given to Niccolò Michelozzi, a known adherent of the Medici, and whose sole business, now that the Militia Ordinance was abolished, consisted in writing letters.[4]

Then all the mock reforms (for so they were styled) were suddenly interrupted by events abroad and at home, and the latter served to aggravate Machiavelli's afflictions. Owing to the withdrawal of the French, Parma, Piacenza, Modena, and Reggio had surrendered to the Pope; Brescia had been ceded to the Viceroy; Peschiera and Legnago had capitulated to Lang, Bishop of Gurk, who was a sort of *alter ego* of the Emperor in Italy. As usual, this aroused much discontent, and the allies would have come to open strife among themselves had not the Pope gained Lang over to his side by receiving him with the greatest kindness and giving him a cardinal's hat. This instantly brought about a new alliance between the Pope and Maximilian (proclaimed in November at the church of Santa Maria del Popolo), the adhesion of the Emperor to the Vatican Council, and the return of the Sforza to Milan. Maximilian, son of Lodovico the Moor, was escorted to Milan to take possession of

[1] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. 83.

[2] Florence Archives, "Deliberazioni dei Signori e Collegi," 1511–12, No. 104 (class 11, dist 6, No. 176), at sheets 116*t* and 117.

[3] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. pp 83–5.

[4] On the 20th of November, Piero Guicciardini wrote to his son Francesco, in Spain: "The Signory has cashiered Machiavello and Biagio, and have set up ser Niccolò Michelozzi in Machiavello's place, for the despatch of letters, for there is no talk of battalions at present, and all their constables have also been cashiered. Messer Marcello retains his post" (Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. vi. p. 155).

to the 22nd of February, were decapitated on the evening of that day. Cardinal dei Medici had left Florence the day before, after being assured of the final sentence.[1]

This was a very piteous case, for Boscoli and Capponi, besides being young, inexperienced and enthusiastic, were men of culture and nobility of feeling. Both met their death with much courage, Capponi with almost scornful indifference, while still proclaiming his innocence. Boscoli, who was thirty-two years of age, a handsome, fair man, of engaging appearance, showed equal intrepidity, but was stirred by very different emotions. A friend of his, Luca della Robbia, related to the great sculptor of that name, came to assist him in his last hours, and wrote down word for word the conversation they held together. We have already alluded to this paper, and must now mention it again, for it is an historical document of great value for the due appreciation of the psychological condition of the Italian mind at that period.

When, towards evening, his speedy execution was announced to him, Boscoli became greatly agitated. He seized the Bible and read aloud from it, invoking the spirit of Savonarola to aid him in its interpretation ; and he asked for a confessor from the monastery of St. Mark. To Capponi, who said to him almost in tones of reproof : Oh, Pietro Paolo, then you are not content to die! he would pay no attention. He had no fear of death ; the thoughts that tormented him were of another kind. He hoped to derive strength to die from the stoicism of the ancient philosophers, and reminiscences of Pagan heroes who had exalted conspiracy and inspired hatred against tyranny. But he felt no strength ; he knew not how to meet death with the quiet conscience of a believing Christian. Turning to his consoler, Della Robbia, he exclaimed : Oh, Luca, pray get Brutus out of my head, so that I may make this step entirely as beseems a good Christian ; and then fell into an agony of despair. On the arrival of the confessor, Della Robbia hurried to meet him, and asked him privately : Is it really true that St. Thomas condemns conspiracy? And as the friar replied in the affirmative, he added : Well, then ! tell him so, that he may not die in ignorance. When the confessor, seeing the great agitation of the unhappy youth, tried to inspire him with courage to meet his fate, Boscoli immediately answered with some irritation :—Father, do not lose time in teaching me what I already know from the philosophers. Help me to learn to die for the love of Christ. On being at last led to the scaffold, the executioner, with singular and truly Tuscan courtesy, begged his pardon while fastening his bonds, and offered to intercede with the Almighty

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol ii p. 25 and fol.

consecration. The first ceremony took place on the 15th; on the 17th he was consecrated Pope, under the name of Leo X.; on the 19th he was crowned. The ceremony of his investiture surpassed in splendour and luxury anything previously seen, even in an age so remarkable for splendour and luxury. The festivities of a single day cost the sum of 100,000 ducats.[1] There were triumphal arches and inscriptions, processions, statues of pagan divinities, money scattered on all sides. The days of Imperial Rome seemed to have returned. In Florence this election was hailed with universal rejoicing, for the new Pope was a Mæcenas and a Florentine, and all hoped to obtain his favours. It seemed to occur to no one that in this way the Medici were striking still deeper root, and gaining more power and mastery, and that henceforward their expulsion would be an impossibility. On the contrary, the city appeared to take pride in the Cardinal's election.

But a Genoese who witnessed the great joy of the Florentines, remarked to them: "Just now you congratulate yourselves on having a native Pope; but before you have had so many as Genoa has had, you will have learnt, to your cost, what the greatness of Popes may bring upon independent cities."[2] This man was not only a true prophet of after events; but, meanwhile, the public rejoicings were already disturbed by a very strange and painful circumstance that happened at the time. Shortly before the arrival of the news of the illness of Julius II., a certain Bernardino Coccio, of Sienna, found in the house of the Lenzi, Soderini's kinsmen, a slip of paper dropped from the pocket of a young man named Pietro Paolo Boscoli, who was a well-known adversary of the Medici. Coccio had picked up the paper, and seeing that it contained a list of eighteen or twenty names, including that of Niccolò Machiavelli, he consigned it to the Balia of Eight, who, scenting a conspiracy, immediately imprisoned Boscoli, together with his intimate friend, Agostino di Luca Capponi. Being put to torture, they both freely confessed that they had intended to redeem their country's liberty; but had formed no conspiracy, nor communicated their designs to any one, that the names on the paper were only those of persons whom they hoped to find favourable, supposing them to be friends of free government. Nevertheless, the majority of those on the list, together with others, were thrown into prison; and although it seemed clear enough that the affair was of little moment, and had no support from the citizens, yet Boscoli and Capponi, after being kept in confinement from the 18th

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. v. pp 196–8.
[2] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii p 31.

the subject to Pietro Dovizi da Bibbiena, in Venice, telling him that "a plot had been discovered intended to do violence to me and to some concerns of ours; but nothing has been ascertained save an evil intention without bottom or following."[1] He subjoined a list of twelve citizens, more or less compromised, and among them stood the name of Machiavelli, who, in fact, was also cast into prison. Giuliano wrote no more at that time. But during the first moments a certain alarm had been felt, and therefore a decree was issued, requiring the citizens to cease from wearing arms And the citizens not only laid aside their weapons, but hastened to Giuliano's residence to assure him of their fidelity; and some relations of the accused prisoners even came to ask that justice should be executed.[2]

On the 7th of March, when Boscoli and Capponi were already dead, and the various trials at an end, Giuliano again wrote to Bibbiena, saying that the city had shown the greatest affection to the Medici, and adding: "Boscoli and Capponi, young men of good families, but without followers, have been the ringleaders of the conspiracy. They meant to dispossess us; they had fixed the spot, and drawn up a list of persons with whom they thought to find favour; they had spoken with and secured the attention of Niccolò Valori and Giovanni Folchi. For this reason the two principals have been condemned to death, the two latter to confinement for two years in the fortress of Volterra. Several have been banished into the country for having had some share in the plot; all the others who were accused and imprisoned have been set at liberty as innocent men, after having given trustworthy bail."[3]

And no word was said regarding Machiavelli. He had been at once thrown into prison, and put to torture with the others, to see if any information could be extracted from him. His name stood on the list given up to the Eight; and the office he had filled, and his constant friendship for Soderini, cast suspicion upon him. His attestations of submission to the Medici had served him little; whereas all that he had said and written against Soderini's Florentine accusers and slanderers, had done him serious injury. Had he been guilty, he certainly would not have been spared; but after

[1] This letter is included in the "Diarii" of Marin Sanuto. See Appendix (II.) of Italian edition, document xv.

[2] These notices are taken from a letter written from Florence on the 13th of February, and is to be found in the "Diarii" of Marin Sanuto, vol. xv. at sheet 320*t*, in St Mark's Library at Venice

[3] See Appendix (II) of Ital. ed., document xvi, for this second letter, which is also to be found in the "Diarii" of Sanuto.

for him. Boscoli replied: Fulfil your office; but when you have placed my head on the block, let me stay a little, and then despatch me. I shall be grateful if you will pray to God for me. He had determined to devote his last moments to a final desperate effort to approach the Almighty.

The confessor felt so much admiration for Boscoli, that, on afterwards meeting Della Robbia, he told him that he had wept for a whole week, so greatly had he learnt to love the courageous youth during that fatal night. I believe him to be a blessed martyr, he said, in conclusion,—a martyr who has gone straight to Paradise, without being detained in Purgatory. And as to the question you asked me that night on the subject of conspiracy, I must tell you that St. Thomas draws a distinction. In the case of tyrants chosen by the people, it is not lawful to conspire against them, but if, on the contrary, they have established themselves by force, then conspiracy becomes a virtue. But avoid repeating this to any one, otherwise it will be said, that these friars always twist things to suit their affections. Luca della Robbia records that, on going home, he referred to the pages of St. Thomas Aquinas and found that the friar had quoted him correctly.[1]

This narrative clearly shows how often Christian and Pagan ideas were then in conflict, notwithstanding the enormous labour expended on endeavours to bring them into harmony. Christianity had taken possession of private life, of individual morality, and in that way had been easily brought into agreement with the resuscitated philosophy, especially by means of the new Platonism. Public life, on the other hand, seemed to form a world apart—a world whose laws were very frequently opposed to Gospel morality, and of which the ideal was rather to be found in Greek and Roman history. Most certainly the conspirators, patriots, politicians, and captains of the Italy of the Renaissance, drew their inspiration from Brutus, Cæsar, Lycurgus, Solon, or Epaminondas, but never from the Gospel. This generated contradictory mental states, of which we find numerous examples in the literature and life of the period; but it has never been so graphically set forth and described as in Robbia's account of the confession of Boscoli.

The condemnation of the two young men, and the fact of Machiavelli's name having been mixed up with the conspiracy, gave an exaggerated importance to the whole affair. Of this we find trustworthy evidence in the letters of Giuliano dei Medici. On the 19th of February, the day after the first arrests, he wrote on

[1] "Recitazione del caso di Pietro Paolo Boscoli e di Agostino Capponi," written by Luca della Robbia in the year 1513. "Archivio Storico," vol. i. pp. 283-309.

how best to shield himself from the storm, and as usual was weaving complicated schemes, by which, under the high protection of the Medici, at least some fragment of liberty might be preserved But what can we think of the three sonnets, written by him in these days, and dedicated, as it would appear, to Giuliano dei Medici? Two of them, indeed, seemed to have been composed in his prison cell for the purpose of obtaining pardon. In the first he narrates how the Muse came to seek the poet and did not recognize him, finding him so sadly changed that she mistook him for a madman, wherefore he appeals to Giuliano to prove his identity In the second he describes the prison in which he was lodged, after having suffered six turns of the rack.[1] The stench was horrible, the walls "crawling with vermin so big and swollen that they seem like moths." On all sides is a noise as of hell. This prisoner is being chained, that one loosened, a third cries that the ropes are hoisting him too far from the ground.

> "Quel che mi fe' più guerra
> Fu che, dormendo presso all' aurora,
> Cantando sentii dire : Per voi s'ôra.
> Or vadano in malora,
> Purchè vostra pietà ver' me si voglia,
> Buon padre, e questi rei lacciuol ne scioglia." [2]

Is it possible that Machiavelli, from his prison, should have addressed these verses to Giuliano? Of course we are aware that at all times he was apt to push sarcasm and satire to the point of cynicism, jesting even on things and persons that were sacred to him. There is his well-known epigram, for instance, on the death of Piero Soderini, whom nevertheless he had always loved, and to whom he was to the last a most faithful friend :

> "La notte che morì Piero Soderini,
> L'alma n'andò dell' Inferno alla bocca;

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[1] Ricci, as we have said, speaks of four turns only; Machiavelli, on the other hand, alleges that there were six. It will be seen, however, that we cannot regard these sonnets in the light of indisputable historical documents.

[2] These lines may be roughly rendered :—

> "That which most hurt me
> Was that, as I slumbered near to dawn,
> I heard a voice chaunt : For you they pray.
> Now may all perish,
> If your mercy only incline to me,
> Good father, and will loose me from these guilty bonds.'

a few turns of the rack,[1] and after the confessions of his companions, his judges were convinced that he knew nothing, pronounced him innocent and set him at liberty.[2] Also the Pope, having already satisfied his first longing for revenge, showed a disposition for leniency, as soon as his election was proclaimed; and therefore, by a decree of the 4th of April, the Balìa granted full pardon, not only to all those suspected of complicity in the plot, but even released from banishment the Soderini family, inclusive of the ex-Gonfalonier.[3] It is easy, however, to comprehend that suspicion, imprisonment, and torture, should have deeply afflicted Machiavelli, and aggravated to no slight degree the distresses of his present position.

On the 13th of March he wrote to Francesco Vettori, Ambassador in Rome, and announcing his release, added that in this affair all things had combined to his injury. He trusted, however, to fall into no more dangers of the kind, "not only because I shall be more cautious, but because the times will be more liberal and less inclined to suspicion." After Vettori had replied, with protestations of friendship and encouraging words, Machiavelli wrote again to say that he had known how to face his fate, and had borne his affliction with so much hardihood, "that I am really pleased with myself, and think there is more in me than I ever before believed."[4] And, even then, with his hands still crippled and painful from the torture he had suffered, he expressed his desire and hope of being employed by the Medici. But of that matter we shall speak further on.

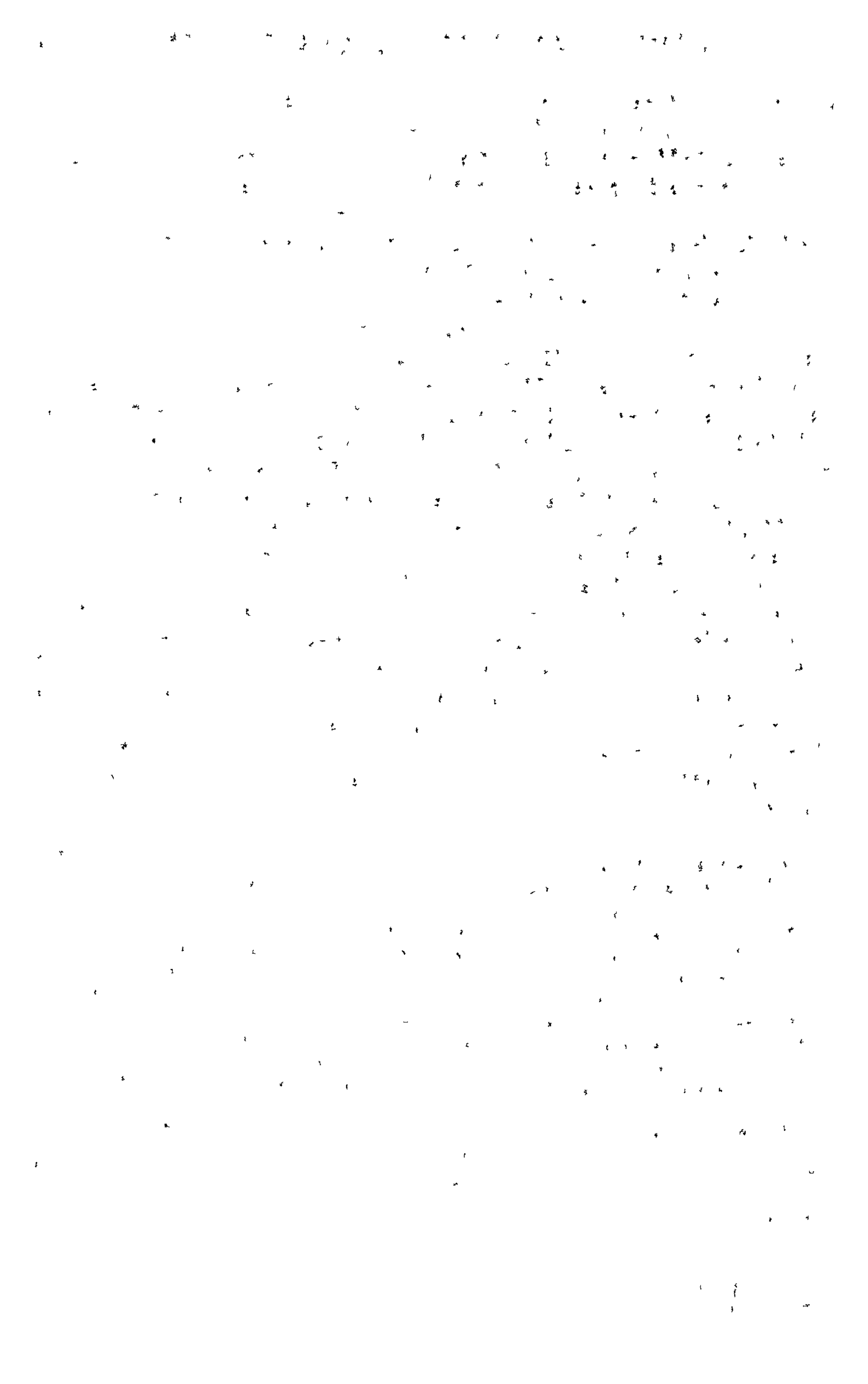
In face of these real and ascertained facts, all fantastic theories about Machiavelli having then conspired in favour of liberty, and against the life of Giuliano dei Medici, and of his having suffered confinement and torture in that cause, entirely disappear. No one, save inexperienced youths, would have dreamt of conspiracy at a moment when the entire city was so well disposed towards its new masters, and so proud to see one of them raised to the Papacy. Machiavelli, on the contrary, was occupied in meditating

[1] In Ricci's "Priorista" (Quartiere Santo Spirito, at sheet 270) it is related that he suffered four turns of the rack; while elsewhere, as we shall see, the number given is six.

[2] The 26th of June, 1513, Machiavelli wrote to his relative, Giovanni Vernaccia, at Pera, telling him not to be astonished that he had not heard from him for so long; "rather is it a miracle that I am still alive, for I have been deprived of my office, and I have been on the point of losing my life, which God and my innocence have preserved to me" ("Opere," vol viii. p. 59).

[3] Ammirato, "Istorie Fiorentine," vol. vi. bk. xxix. p 313; "Archivio Fiorentino," cl. 11, dist. 4, No. 19, sheet 101.

[4] Letter of the 13th of March, 1512–13 "Opere," vol viii. p 29



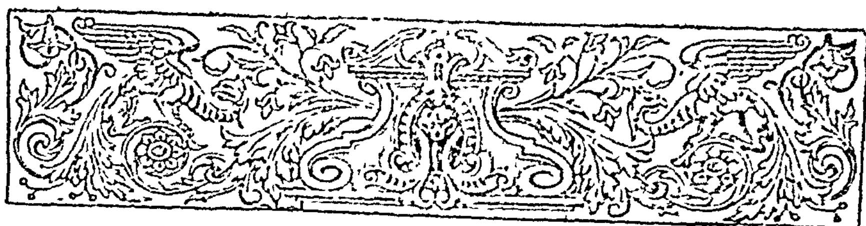
E Pluto le gridò : Anima sciocca,
Che Inferno ! va 'nel Limbo dei bambini." [1]

Some have thrown doubts on the true authorship of these lines ; but not only have they long been attributed to Machiavelli, and published under his name, but even his own grandson, Giuliano dei Ricci, in the "Priorista" from which we have so frequently quoted, attributes them to his grandfather without expressing the slightest doubt upon the subject, and excuses him by saying that he wrote them merely as a poetical exercise, since he had always had the most genuine esteem for Soderini.[2] The fact is, that in these jesting lines, putting aside the question of their bad taste—there is a certain foundation of truth ; and Machiavelli had always censured the Gonfalonier's excessive moderation, accusing him of having, even in the hour of danger, put his trust in half measures, and of never daring to take vigorous steps in order to protect himself from the enemies of the Republic.

The two sonnets, however, constitute a very different case What opinion of him could we entertain had he really written to Giuliano, that on hearing the funeral chaunts accompanying the friends of liberty on their way to the scaffold, he had exclaimed, "Well, let them perish, so long as Your Magnificence will grant me pardon ?" Cynicism so degraded as this would have disgusted even Giuliano, who, in his letters to Bibbiena, speaks with dignified reticence of the two young men who were condemned to death. Neither can it be supposed that Machiavelli's numerous enemies, who heaped so many false and slanderous accusations upon him, would all have kept silence on a circumstance that certainly did him very little honour. Also, if he had really exceeded in this fashion, it is scarcely probable that he would not have made some allusion to it in his letters to Francesco Vettori, to whom he detailed all that he did and said in those days, and whom he begged to intercede for him with the Medici. But these letters, on the contrary, tend to prove that he then appealed to no one, that he suffered torture with fortitude, and that certainly he was not upon sufficiently familiar terms with Giuliano to dare to address burlesque verses to him in the hope of winning his favour. To him and to Paolo Vettori he owed his speedy release from

[1] "The night that Piero Soderini ceased to breathe,
His soul journeyed to the mouth of Hell ;
But Pluto cried : 'Thou foolish soul,
No Hell for thee ! Go seek the Limbo of the babes !'"

[2] "Machiavelli wrote this epitaph in a poetic spirit, since whenever he spoke seriously and not in jest of Soderini, he always praised him and held him in high esteem" Ricci's "Priorista," Quartiere Santo Spirito, sheet 237.



CHAPTER XVI.

The Medicean government in Florence—Machiavelli's difficulties—His correspondence with Francesco Vettori.

(1513–1514.)



HE fortunes of the Medici were now rising with marvellous rapidity, not in Florence only, but throughout Italy. From all parts of Europe men of letters were hastening to Rome to wait upon the new Pope, at whose hands they hoped for a return of the Golden Age. And the Pope immediately chose for his secretaries two *literati* of great celebrity—Bembo and Sadoleto. His first acts proclaimed the advent of tolerance and peace. At Florence, as we have seen, the prisoners suspected of a share in the plot were liberated by his express desire. The pact arranged with the Soderini for the marriage of Gian Vittorio's daughter to Lorenzo dei Medici could not be carried out on account of the lively opposition of Lorenzo's mother, Alfonsina. However, the Pope thought that he had adjusted matters well by transferring the bride to Luigi Ridolfi, his sister's son.[1] This alliance was useless for the prosecution of his pacific intents, as he found when it was too late; but for the moment things went smoothly, and apparently every one was content. The ex-Gonfalonier established his residence in Rome, and even his relatives returned from banishment. The Cardinals of St. Malò, Santa Croce, and San Severino, were reinstated in

[1] Nerli, "Commentarii," pp. 124, 125.

there are no real, intrinsic reasons for doubting their authorship The conclusion we have come to is this: that the sonnets in question are not supplications for pardon, and that they were never sent to Giuliano; but were instead written for amusement, as a capricious, ironical, even cynical outburst, and composed by Machiavelli in a moment of ill-humour. Thus he wrote them with comic exaggeration, wilfully making himself appear worse than he was, and later forgot all about them, unable to foresee that after many centuries they would be disinterred, and that he would be called to account for words he had possibly used only for the sake of rhyme. And that the two sonnets are to be regarded rather as jesting trifles, than in any other light, is confirmed by a third discovered at a later date and published by Trucchi in 1847.[1] In this Machiavelli sends Giuliano a gift of thrushes, begging him to give them to his enemies to nibble, so that they might cease from gnawing him (Machiavelli) so ferociously. And if the thrushes are thought lean, I shall say that I too am lean, "yet they get good mouthfuls out of me."

"E spiccan pur di me de' buoni bocconi."

Now, it is not likely that any one will believe that Machiavelli should have actually sent a present of thrushes to Giuliano. So it is plain that in a fit of rage and ill-humour, he, who was not only unconcerned in the conspiracy, and too experienced to even hope for any good results from it, indulged his bile by a private outburst against the spitefulness of fate, and against the man who had so lightly exposed him to so bitter a trial. In doing this he overstepped all limits, and his sarcasm amounted to cynicism; but this happened to him more than once in his life, and his writings furnish us with many other examples. But this in no way justifies a suspicion of degraded cowardice at a moment when, on the contrary, Machiavelli had given proofs of undoubted courage.

exaggeration in the description of prison horrors, and of the clanking chains worn by Machiavelli and his fellow prisoners, things of which no mention is made in the letters written to Vettori. All this, however, proves nothing. They are matters of little moment. It is certain that the prisoners were chained, just as it is possible that Ricci did not know the exact amount of torture inflicted upon his grandfather.

[1] Trucchi, "Poesie inedite di dugento autori," four vols. Prato, Guasti, 1846 and 1847, vol iii p. 175. This sonnet, says Trucchi, "is extracted from a Lucchese codex, transcribed by the hand of the very learned Canon Biscioni, who found it in the Codex of Redi" (Ibid. p. 172).

therefore, who was Machiavelli's successor, was almost to act the part of confidant and spy. "Whenever," the Pope continued, "it may be requisite for thee, in order to yield to appeals, to employ persons of whom thou art not assured, at least take heed that they be not men of much courage or talent. Then, above all, thou must assure thyself of the Eight and of the Balìa, and have some one among them to provide thee with minute reports of everything, according to my own practice." In fact, all State affairs were decided by the Eight, and the Balìa was the chief and trusted instrument by which the Medici had always been able to preserve their authority in the Republic. "It is necessary to disarm the citizens; take heed of spies; satisfy the ambition of those who cannot be in the Signory by giving them lesser offices; show much justice to the poor and to the peasantry; never be involved in any civil suits about money affairs. It is highly important to elect to the offices of the *Monte*, or Bank, keen-witted, secret, and trusty men, entirely devoted to thee, since the *Monte* is the heart of the city."[1] The Medici had often, in case of need, and without the slightest scruple, appropriated the public monies; and therefore the Pope pointed out and recommended the best way of ensuring this, in these instructions which form so exact a summary of the traditional policy of his house.

But the final result of these astute counsels was, that Lorenzo was compelled to re-establish things as they had been before 1494; that is to say, with all the appearance of temporary Republican institutions, and with a Balìa enabling him to obtain the election of whichever magistrates he pleased. For the moment, the general sifting of candidates was already completed, and it would have been inexpedient to renew it. The Council of Seventy was revived, as it had been originally established in 1482 by Lorenzo the Magnificent, and also the Ancient Council of One Hundred, renewed every half year, and which had power to decree taxation grants of money, and even pass laws of greater importance—matters previously always requiring the sanction of the Seventy. Also, to pander to every one's ambition, occasional popular and communal councils were chosen by ballot, with right of decision on the petitions of private individuals, always, however, after discussion in the Council of Seventy. And in order to simulate a complete revival of the institutions prior to 1494, the Council of Ten for war was replaced by the Eight of Pratica. In point of fact, however, these institutions were now, as under the Medici,

[1] "Instructione al Magnifico Lorenzo," published by Tommaso Gar in the "Archivio Storico," Appendix 8 (pp. 299–306), among the "Documenti rigaurdanti Giuliano dei Medici e il pontefice Leone X."

their dignities. Besides the two Orators, Jacopo Salviati and Francesco Salviati, already settled in Rome, Florence sent a special embassy of twelve citizens to offer their congratulations to the new Pope The number of Florentines daily arriving on their own account to present congratulations and ask favours went on multiplying to so great an extent, that at last Leo. X. exclaimed, that in all the throng he had only met with two men—Soderini, who was supremely wise, and a certain Carafulla, who was supremely foolish—who had appealed to him in the interest of their city instead of in their own.[1]

As may well be imagined, the Pope's relatives were not backward in appearing. Giulio dei Medici, one of the first to arrive, was created Archbishop of Florence on the death of Cosimo dei Pazzi, and afterwards Cardinal. Giuliano was elected Captain and Gonfalonier of the Holy Church ; later he was married to Philiberte of Savoy, and thus became Duke of Nemours, and was more and more alienated from the government of Florence, for which he never seemed to have much inclination. He had a fantastic, almost mystical disposition, causing him to waste much time in endeavouring to peer into the future ; still he was not wanting in vague and even sometimes noble ambitions, and was also susceptible to generous impulses. These he manifested when the Pope wished to confer upon him the Duchy of Urbino, forcibly dispossessing Francesco Maria della Rovere. Giuliano declined the offer, because he had been sheltered at Urbino in times of adversity, had afterwards received many benefits from Della Rovere, and would not pay him back with ingratitude. Lorenzo took great pleasure in ruling Florence ; but he wished to rule as absolute master, and this being impossible soon wearied of the task.

Lorenzo had now returned from Rome in the company of Jacopo Salviati, a very powerful citizen who had been sent with Vettori, as one of the ambassadors to the Pope, in order to remove him from Florence, where he was considered over friendly to free institutions But no one dared refuse him leave to return, on his decided declaration that he would no longer stay away.[2] On this occasion the Pope thought it needful to give Lorenzo a few written instructions of his own, on the method of ruling the town with prudence. They were to this effect : "Thou must use thy best endeavours to introduce men of thine own into all the principal offices of the State. Seek to be well informed how the Signory agree with one another, and for this purpose thou wilt find a useful instrument in Niccolò Michelozzi." This individual,

[1] Nardi, "Storie," vol ii. p 33. [2] Nerli, "Commentarii," p. 120.

Soderini, had demonstrated his powers of usefulness and his entire trustworthiness. But exactly because he had been the factotum of the fallen government, it was not probable that he should be sought or accepted by the very men by whom that government had been overthrown. They might desire to conciliate the rich and powerful Soderini family, of which one member wore the purple, but there was no reason for them to fear, or show consideration to a simple secretary In fact, Machiavelli's circle of friends was rapidly thinning, and he found himself forsaken, and left to pine in idleness and misery. It cannot be said that he was actually in poverty; but the modest paternal inheritance, that in 1511,[1] and by an agreement with his brother Totto, had come into his possession, was certainly not ceded to him without compensation, nor was it unburdened with debts. We find a receipt dated 1513,[2] of the payment of the large sum of a thousand florins, made in various instalments in his name and that of his brother Totto. This had left him with means barely sufficing for the ordinary necessities of an increasing family. At that time he had a wife, one daughter, and three sons, and in September, 1514, another male child was born to him. Even his grandson Giuliano dei Ricci spoke of him as "poor and burdened with children."[3]

Accustomed to spend freely, the sudden failure of his salary and the heavy payments which he had to make almost at the same time, compelled him to calculate every farthing, endure many privations, and sometimes even lack the necessaries of life. He found this insupportable; but harder still, to a man of his very active temperament, was the forced idleness to which he was now condemned He had never exercised the profession, nor led the life of a man of letters; neither had he the dignified energy and moral strength of character which almost exult in resistance to unmerited blows of adversity His condition was indeed pitiable He struggled painfully against misfortune, and in vain sought an office that should bring him emolument and occupation. He heard from afar news of the great events going on in Italy, and his mind was feverishly excited by daring, profound, and singular reflections upon what was being done, or on what might and

1 "Opere" (P. M), vol. ii. pp 58, 59.

2 This bears date 28th of October, 1513, and is to be found numbered 212 among the documents of the Ricci-Poniatowski Archives, recently added to the Florence Archives. The receipt is signed by Pier Francesco *del fu* Antonio da Rabatta as procurator for Leonardo di Piero Pitti to Niccolò di Bernardo Machiavelli and his brother Totto in quittance of one thousand gold florins, paid in several instalments, according to the terms arranged in 1510.

3 "Prioista," Quartiere Santo Spirito, at sheet 160*t*.

nothing more than empty shams. The whole government was carried on by the Balìa and the Seventy.

Nevertheless, it was difficult steering among so many treacherous rocks, and the greatest caution was required. The more so because, now that Cardinal Giovanni was Pope, none of the Medici remaining in Florence possessed sufficient personal authority to ensure safety amidst such hazardous and uncertain conditions; and what was worse, had little interest in the task. Bishop Giulio thought only of ecclesiastical advancement, dreaming, too, of the Papal crown, which he afterwards attained. Giuliano was weaving great and novel designs; and his courtiers even mooted the possibility of his becoming King of Naples, during the political complications that were at hand. There remained Lorenzo, who was very young and of a tyrannical nature, but, as we have remarked, he too became wearied of Florence. On the one hand there was the Pope advising prudence, and on the other, no sooner did he show his desire to act as real master, than he received warnings from various quarters, especially from Jacopo Salviati, that he had better be careful, since this was not the way to long retain his place at the head of Florentine affairs. All these reasons made him prefer to recur to the *rôle* of Pope's nephew, rather than enjoy a mere show of power on condition of observing a thousand precautions with every one and in all things, while in Rome "he had to consider no one in the world."[1] Nevertheless, Leo X. was anxious that the government of Tuscany should be retained by his family, inasmuch as his influence over Italian and foreign potentates was thereby greatly increased. So, for some time Florentine affairs continued to oscillate between republican forms and despotic government.

A similar state of things was well adapted to tickle the hopes of Machiavelli, and set his intelligence to work. Once the Medici, whether willingly or unwillingly, should consent to accept power in the shape of a sovereign protectorate of the Republic, and this prove to satisfy the universal wish of the citizens, he thought it would be easy to strike out new combinations, by means of which, while contenting the ambition of the *masters*, it might be possible to preserve liberty for the future. Might not the marvellous good fortune of the Pope furnish a way of establishing the affairs of Italy on a permanent footing? Machiavelli desired and knew himself qualified to offer a huge amount of excellent advice, and felt some astonishment that no one had yet thought of applying to one, who by his work with

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 300.

that in all these confidential outpourings he makes not the slightest mention of his wife or his children. This silence was the one link still connecting him with his times, for in those days writers never seemed to admit their readers into the innermost recesses of their private emotions.

The confidant of Machiavelli was, as we know, the Ambassador, Francesco Vettori, who, although left alone in Rome by the departure of Salviati, had very little business to transact, since the Pope himself assumed the direction of the government of Florence. So his time was passed in writing a few despatches to the Signoria and the Eight of Pratica, and in endeavouring to gain the patronage of the Medici for himself and also for his friends, including Machiavelli; but without taking much pains about it, or ever imperilling his own interests. A man of culture, talent, and decidedly loose habits, he now devoted his leisure partly to study of the classics and partly to sensual pleasures, although he was no longer young, and had a wife and marriageable daughters. He was not even restrained by the dignity of his office; but, on the contrary, delighted in freely speaking and writing on the most unseemly topics. What chiefly bound him to Machiavelli, besides the old habit of intimacy, was his high esteem for the ex-secretary's intellect, and consequently his keen desire to know the latter's opinions on the great events either daily occurring or foreseen to be near at hand. And Machiavelli, being always ready to discuss politics, replied to him at great length, either to kill time or the better to win the esteem and goodwill of the friend from whom he hoped to receive assistance.

Such was the origin of this correspondence, which, particularly in the years 1513 and 1514, was carried on without any interruption. Its principal themes were, first of all, the politics of the day; then Machiavelli's occasionally expressed desire to obtain employment, and Vettori's efforts in his favour; and lastly, the narration of their love affairs. Truly this narration is but too often of so indecent a character as to excite indignant disgust. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that it was chiefly in such matters that the times differed so strangely from our own. In these days much is done that is never mentioned, while at that time men talked freely even of things that were not done. Conversation or correspondence on the most scandalous subjects, especially on the part of men who, like Vettori and Machiavelli, had passed their youth and been trained among scholars, was little more than a praiseworthy literary pastime, an imitation of the antique, even of nature itself. Giuliano dei Ricci, who was a decorous

should be done by genuine statesmen. But as these were nothing but vain speculations, he speedily relapsed into pangs of lonely despair. Thereupon he gave himself up to sensual pleasures; mocked at everything and everybody; and invoked his pungent, biting gift of satire, to deaden the pain of his humiliation. He wrote verses pregnant with cold, ironical cynicism; he planned indecent comedies. Then, all of a sudden he would turn to the poets, the historians of old; would pace up and down, book in hand and meditating on the past or the present, in the solitary woods of his little estate near San Casciano, which was his place of retirement. After these rambles, he would shut himself up in his study, and forgetting his troubles, would pen some of the pages of political science which have kept his name alive through all these centuries But then again echoes of outer events would awaken his attention, and once more excite his desires and hopes of better days and of practical activity. And thus his life dragged on amid these alternations of feeling.

About this time Machiavelli had the good fortune to find a friend, and better still a confidant, to whom he could pour out his feelings; and thus we find in his letters an exact, faithful, and eloquent exposition of his mental experiences. Indeed, these letters are memorials of great importance in the literature of the sixteenth century; since they constitute the first example of intimate and minute psychological analysis, are almost a confession and examination of conscience carried on reciprocally by the two friends. Machiavelli's correspondent was moved to follow Machiavelli's lead to so great an extent, that occasionally the letters of the one might be confounded with those of the other.[1] Now in the correspondence of Guicciardini and his other contemporaries, we only descry the writer's real mind as though through the folds of a thick veil; for all these men merely described and analysed that which they did, never that which they felt. Machiavelli showed a fuller self-consciousness, a livelier need of opening his soul; therefore—rarely as he spoke of himself—his letters afford us the first really clear manifestation of the modern spirit. All the more strange, therefore, is it to note

[1] See "Die Briefe des florentinischen Kanzlers und Geschichtschreiber N Machiavelli. Aus dem Italienischen übersetz," von D Heinrich Leo. Berlin, Ferdinand Dummler, 1826. It is very difficult to understand how a man of the talent and erudition of Herr Leo, can have been led to state in the preface to this translation that Vettori was a pedant of no talent (pp. 24, 25). His "Sommario della Storia d'Italia," from which we have frequently quoted, would be alone sufficient to prove that he was a man of great capacity, and that Herr Leo has grossly misjudged him. The many offices filled by Vettori with distinguished credit, also testify to his importance as a politician

that seems like a dream."[1] And Vettori, in reply, without holding out any definite hopes, invited him to his house in Rome, "where we will try so many devices that we shall contrive to succeed in something; and besides, there is a wench near my house who will help us to pass the time"[2] But however much Machiavelli tried to maintain his courage and to keep pace with his friend's jests, yet he could not hide his dejection. The news received of the failure of the attempted negotiations had "frightened him more than the rack." "Yet," he added, "if we cannot roll, we must let ourselves be rolled, and I will give myself no concern about it."[3] No sooner did Giuliano go to Rome, than Machiavelli again appealed to Vettori to do at once all he could in his favour. "It is an excellent opportunity, and if the thing be skilfully managed it is impossible that I should not obtain some employment, if not in Florence, at least in the service of Rome and the Papacy, in which case I ought to be less suspected" And in the same letter he gives a description of the far from respectable company in which he lived, and whose place of meeting was the shop of Donato del Corno, whom he describes in such fashion as though to indicate that the man in question kept a haunt of vice. But suddenly he can no longer restrain himself, and exclaims like one driven to despair:

> "Però se alcuna volta io rido e canto,
> Facciol, perchè non ho se non quest' una
> Via da sfogare il mio angoscioso pianto."[4]

And then he once more changes the subject.

Here, however, it may be noted that there must have been much exaggeration even in his way of speaking of this Donato del Corno and the shop kept by him. Ricci simply tells us that he was "a pleasant and well-to-do man, and that his shop was the meeting-place of many persons, and particularly of Niccolo Machiavelli, for whom he had a great friendship."[5] In fact this Donato must have been a man of great wealth and also of some ambition, since he was able to make a loan of 500 ducats to Giuliano dei Medici when the latter first came to Florence; and afterwards, through Machiavelli, he intimated to Vettori, that he would give 100 ducats to any one procuring his election as a

[1] "Opere," vol viii letter xi, 18th of March, 1512-13.
[2] Ibid, vol. viii. letter xii., 9th of April, 1513
[3] Ibid, vol. viii letter xiii., 9th of April, 1513.
[4] "Yet if I sometimes laugh and sing, it is because 'tis only thus I may vent my bitter tears." See "Opere," vol. viii. letter xiv, 16th of April.
[5] Ricci, "Priorista," Quartiere Santo Spirito, sheet 284.

man, living at a later period, and to whose industry we are indebted for many of these letters, stated, after transcribing them, that the aim of his labour was to show his "gratitude to the remains of those two excellent men, my relations." [1]

After reading these epistles with the closest attention, and comparing those of Machiavelli with Vettori's published and unpublished papers, we have come to the conclusion that the latter is very precise and exact in narrating incidents which had really happened to him, with a cynical frankness leaving no room for doubt. Machiavelli, on the contrary, either through fanciful caprice or for the sake of imitating his friend, greatly exaggerated facts which were only partially true. On every occasion when it has been possible to follow with some certainty the development of his pretended love adventures, we have seen them shrink to much smaller proportions, and almost fade into nothing, proving in the end far more innocent than they appeared at the beginning. Nevertheless, they had still some basis of truth; since he neither was, nor ever pretended to be, a man of chaste habits. And during that period so fatal to Italy, many tried to drown in sensual pleasures the pangs of ruined hopes and vanished illusions, together with their presentiments of greater evils to come. It cannot be denied that more than once Machiavelli sought relief in a life that lowered him in his own eyes and inevitably degrades him in ours.

The correspondence began on the 13th of March, 1513, by a letter in which Machiavelli told Vettori of his release from prison; and directly after, while still bearing the scars of the torture inflicted upon him, he adds: "Try, if possible, to keep me in the memory of our master; so that, if it were possible, I might begin to be useful in some way to him or his house, since thereby I should be doing credit to you and good to myself." [2] And five days later, having thanked his friend for the goodwill shown by him at the time of his incarceration, and told him that he owed his safety to the Magnificent Giuliano and to Paolo Vettori, he again appeals to his kind offices, in order that "these *masters* of mine may not leave me in neglect. And if nothing can be done, I must live as I came into the world, for I was born poor, and learnt to want before learning to enjoy." Meanwhile he rubbed on in the society of his friends and running from one woman to another; "and thus we go on gaining time in the midst of this universal happiness, and enjoying what remains to us of the life

[1] "Priorista" Ricci, Quartiere Santo Spirito, famiglia Vettori, at sheet 87*t*.
[2] "Opere," vol viii letter ix, 13th of March, 1512-13.

stirred to reply, and in two letters of the 5th of January and 4th of February, thoroughly unbridled his tongue. It would be quite impossible to repeat his words. He referred to the scenes described by Vettori, reproduced them in his imagination, gave life and action and speech to all the personages, with a genuine *vis comica* entirely worthy of Boccaccio, whom indeed he has more than once surpassed. He wound up by saying: "And since you come to me for advice, as to one who understands womankind and has suffered the stings of Love's darts, I would counsel you to throw off all restraint, and give yourself up to Love without heeding what any one may say; this I myself have done, for I have followed Love over hill and dale and through forest and field, and have found that thus Love caressed me more than if I had avoided him."[1] And the letters continue to run on in this strain.[2]

But the burden of pecuniary difficulties by which Machiavelli was oppressed again crushed out all desire for mirth. "The officers of the *Monte* have summoned me to pay taxes to the amount of nine florins of *Decima*, and four and a half of *Arbitrio*.[3] I am struggling to get out of it as best I can, and if you could write a letter certifying to the impossibility of my paying so much, I will leave the matter in your hands."[4] And, accordingly, Vettori wrote in his friend's behalf, declaring that he was "poor and worthy, and, whatever may be said to the contrary, is really so, as I can affirm. He and I have acted in such fashion, that we have taken a great deal of trouble, without ever laying aside a penny. He finds himself with heavy liabilities, with a scanty income, is now penniless, and is burdened with children."[5] But there was no improvement in this state of things, for on the 10th of June in the same year Machiavelli wrote despairingly to Vettori: "Thus, then, I shall have to cower among my rags, without finding any man to take thought of my services, or to think that I can be good for any purpose. But it is impossible that I can long go on thus, for I am wearing out; and I see that I shall be forced, if God will not aid me, to engage myself as a pedagogue, or retire to some out-of-the-way spot to teach children their letters, forsaking my own family as though I were dead; for

[1] "Opere," vol viii. letter xxix., 4th of February, 1513–14.

[2] Letter of Vettori, dated 9th of February, 1513–14; "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 29. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix, document (xvii); "Opere," vol. viii.; Letter xxx. of Machiavelli, dated 25th of February, 1513–14.

[3] *L'Arbitrio* and the *Decima*, or Tithe, were two different taxes.

[4] "Opere," vol viii. letter xxxi, of 16th of April, 1514.

[5] This was first published by Passerini in the Florentine journal, "Il Statuto;" afterwards in the "Opere," Florence, Usigli, 1857, at note to p. 1146.

member of the Signory. Vettori could accomplish nothing, but Donato del Corno was elected in 1522, "perhaps," remarks Ricci, "with smaller trouble and expense."[1] Now although all this may prove that the man was an intriguer, it is clear that to become a member of the Signory he must have been an individual of some note, and that it was impossible that his shop should have been a haunt of ill fame.

From the month of April almost to the close of the year, Machiavelli's letters took a much graver tone, for they turned chiefly upon politics. During these months he was entirely absorbed in study; and as we shall find, composed the "Principe," also worked at his "Discorsi," and therefore gave no attention to Vettori, who was always inciting him to indecent and burlesque narratives. On the 23rd of November, the Ambassador, after describing his own life in Rome, again urged Machiavelli to come to him there. "I have made a collection of historians—Livy, Florus, Tacitus, Suetonius and others—with whom I while away my time; and in reflecting what manner of Emperors this wretched Rome that shook the world has had to submit to, I am no longer surprised it should have tolerated Popes such as the two last. I have nine serving-men, and I see very few people. I write a letter now and then to the Ten,[2] chiefly for the look of the thing, for no business is going on. During the summer I led a very sober life, being in dread of fever; nevertheless, I have always had a few women about me. This, then, is the life I invite you to share. You would have nothing to do but go out to look about you, and come home to enjoy yourself."[3] Machiavelli does not seem to have paid much heed to these offers just then; but Vettori returned to the charge, and on the 24th of December, gave him a long account of his love affairs and of the intrigues and scenes which had taken place at his house. These he evidently found very amusing, although he made a show of being ashamed of them, as unfitting to a man of his age and position, and wrote in the tone of one appealing to Machiavelli for advice.[4] The latter, after being so much pressed in various ways, was at last

[1] See the before-quoted "Priorista" (Quartiere Santo Spirito, sheet 284), and several of Vettori's and Machiavelli's letters speak of this affair.

[2] The Magistracy of the Otto di Pratica, substituted for the Dieci di Balìa, only entered upon their office on the 10th of June, 1514. Florence Archives, "Lettere degli Otto," years 1514–16, chap. v dist. 5, Nos. 49–50

[3] Letters of Vettori, dated 23rd of November, 1513, and 18th of January, 1513–14. "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. Nos. 26 and 28. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix, document xvii.

[4] Letter of Vettori, dated 24th of December, 1513. "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No 27. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix, document xviii.

should have made alliance with Venice, without asking the opinion of him who wished to be considered the leader of Italian affairs.[1] He therefore declared himself opposed to the war that was already beginning. In June, the French descended into Italy; and shortly before, the Swiss, hired for the Duke of Milan by his active and keen-witted secretary Girolamo Morone, had also crossed the Alps. Meanwhile the Spanish and Imperial troops had beaten the Venetians and advanced as far as Marghera; and France, being attacked at home by the English, Swiss, and Imperial forces, experienced another serious defeat in August, and lost Picardy. Thereupon Louis XII. became more tractable, and sought to make peace by concluding a treaty with the Pope in December, and disowning the *Conciliabolo*

It was at this moment that Leo X. plunged headlong into political intrigue, and began to show his real character. Elected Pope when barely thirty-seven years of age, his affable manners and the reputation for goodness and intellect that he had so dexterously established, had inspired all men with the best hopes concerning him. When, however, it was seen that he began by creating four new Cardinals, and rapidly increased the number to over thirty; that he pursued a policy of vacillation and bad faith with all, even without any particular motive; then the general opinion soon began to change. He made a league against Spain with England and with France, and from the latter power obtained the hand of Philiberte of Savoy for Giuliano dei Medici, who thus became Duke of Nemours At the same time he was secretly preparing another league against France, and in order to induce Venice to join him, sent Cardinal Bembo on a mission to the Republic. Venice, however, simply replied that the Holy Father would do better to remain faithful to the French alliance, through which he might hope to win the kingdom of Naples for his brother Giuliano. Upon this head Vettori remarked: "Seeing that the Pope broke his oaths, and made a constitution one day only to destroy it on the next, he began to lose his reputation for goodness; and although he said many prayers, and frequently fasted, no one believed in him any more. Undoubtedly it is a great labour to try to be at the same time a temporal lord and a religious man, for whoever considers attentively the precepts of the Gospel, will see that the Pontiffs, while preserving the title of Vicars of Christ, have founded a new religion that is Christian only in name; for Christ prescribed poverty, and the Popes desire wealth; He prescribed humility, and they are followers of vainglory; He prescribed obedience, and they wish to command

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," pp 299 and 303.

they would get on better without me, since I am only a burden to them, being accustomed to spend, and unable to exist without spending And I hope not to write to you again on this subject, which is as odious as possible "[1] Nevertheless, he did return to it again, and also recurred to the topic of some love affair of his[2] But now leaving this ungrateful theme, we may come to the chief argument of these letters, namely the remarks and discussions on the political events of the day. These events were on all men's lips, and we must give a rapid outline of them, for the better appreciation of the warmth with which they were commented upon by the two friends.

After the death of Queen Isabella, Ferdinand the Catholic found himself in a position of some difficulty in Spain, where he was only able to preserve order by violent means, and by engaging his subjects in foreign expeditions. He had recently struck one of his accustomed keen and daring blows against the kingdom of Navarre. Profiting by the arrival of 10,000 English soldiers, come to join him in his war with France, he demanded right of passage through Navarre, with the temporary possession of the fortresses; and on the refusal of his strange request, took possession of the whole country. The English withdrew in hot anger, and the French, though desirous of revenging the overthrown prince, also ended by withdrawing. In April, 1513, the French signed a truce with Spain, only to hold good for the countries beyond the Alps, and for the term of one year; but they afterwards renewed it for the following twelvemonth No one seemed to understand the object of this truce, and it contented no one in Italy. It cost Louis XII. the sacrifice of Navarre, and gave Ferdinand time to consolidate his conquest, but on the other hand he was at liberty to prosecute the war in Italy without danger of attack behind his back. Therefore the allied powers, finding themselves compelled at all risks to continue the war, raised the cry that Spain had betrayed them.

In fact, shortly after the election of Leo X., news of the truce was received, and it was also known that France had allied herself to Venice for the purpose of attacking Lombardy in concert. The Venetians, having to reconquer their ravished territories, placed their army under the command of Bartolommeo d'Alviano and France, intending to seize the Duchy of Milan, despatched an army led by La Trémouille. The Pope was dissatisfied with Spain on account of the truce, but was still more irritated that France

[1] "Opere," vol. viii letter xxxiii, of 10th of June, 1514

[2] Ibid., vol viii. letters xxxiv. and xl., of 3rd of August, 1514, and 31st of January, 1514–15.

King of Spain has always been more cunning and fortunate than prudent. As I will not, without reason, allow myself to be moved by any authority, and as *I cannot swallow whole countries*, so I do not believe that there is any hidden meaning in the truce, and incline to think that Spain may have committed an error, planned things badly and executed them worse.[1] Besides, in the present case, we may find an explanation of the truce while even allowing that the king has acted wisely. He made the agreement because he saw how weak was the assistance of the allies, because his country is weary and exhausted, and his best soldiers are in Italy. By the cession of Milan he would have largely augmented the power of France, who is always his enemy, and still more greatly irritated the allies Now, by means of the truce, he opens the eyes of the latter, removes the war from his own gates, and throws Italian affairs into a state of turmoil and discord, in which he thinks to find something to undo and some bones worth the picking; and he hopes that eating will set every one drinking. The confederates being driven to war will certainly suffice, if not to prevent the conquest of Milan, at least to check France. And to my judgment, the end that the King of Spain has in view, is precisely that of compelling, by means of the truce, England and the Emperor to make war in earnest, or at all events to afford him efficacious help. He has always been the ruler of new States and others' subjects. Now, one of the methods of holding these States, and either winning over the doubting souls of these subjects, or keeping them still in doubt, precisely consists in inspiring great expectations of himself at the close of the new enterprises. Such was the monarch's policy in the campaigns of Granada, Africa and Naples; forasmuch as his veritable aim was never this or that victory, but the establishment of his reputation among nations, and keeping all minds bewildered by a multiplicity of deeds. And therefore he is fond of daring beginnings, to which he gives any ending that chance puts in his way, and necessity imposes on him; and so far neither chance nor courage has failed him."[2]

Events proved that Machiavelli was right, and that he had admirably discerned the purport of King Ferdinand's truce[3] Vettori also speedily recognized this, writing that the letter had

[1] In another letter of the 16th of May, 1514, he expresses the same views regarding princes: "My gossip, I know that these kings and princes are men like you and me, and I know that we do many things haphazard, even things of much import to us, and thus it may be supposed that they do likewise" ("Opere," vol. viii. letter xxxii p. 118)

[2] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xvii. pp. 46–55. The end is wanting, so there is no date.

[3] Ibid., vol. viii. letter xviii., of 20th of June, 1513.

all the world."[1] And this was the language held by the Florentine Ambassador in Rome, the friend and adherent of the Medici, whose advice Machiavelli so eagerly sought, in order to be able to gain employment and favour from Leo X.

It may truly be said that the events we have just mentioned were of a sort to turn the strongest brain. Vettori and Machiavelli followed them in their letters step by step, and examined them very minutely. Vettori wrote that he would never discuss politics again, seeing how everything was ruled rather by chance than by reason. To this Machiavelli replied on the 9th of April, 1513: I have experienced the same feeling; yet could I speak with you, I should do nothing but fill your head with castles in the air, since fate has so willed it that, not being able to talk of the manufacture of silk, or wool, nor of gains and losses, I must either hold my tongue or reason of State affairs.[2] But more than all the rest, it was the news of the unexpected truce between Spain and France that excited the speculations of Vettori, who wrote that one morning he had stayed in bed two hours later than usual, vainly guessing at the reasons by which Spain had been induced to sign the truce. He then propounded his own doubts to Machiavelli, and asked his opinion, "since, to tell you the truth, and without flattery, I have found you stronger in these matters than any other man with whom I have spoken. If the truce be a fact, we must say that either the King of Spain is hardly the wise man he is accounted, or that some mischief is brewing, and that Spain and France want to share between them this poor Italy of ours. The more I meditate upon this whirligig, the less can I arrange it in my head How I wish that you and I could start together from the Ponte Vecchio, and down Via dei Bardi all the way to Castello, to talk over this whim of the King of Spain! At the very moment that he has won an advantage over the French, he leaves them at liberty to carry on the war with Italy, whence he desires to expel them. If he found himself in too weak a condition, he would have done better to cede them Milan outright, rather than put them in a position to seize it on their own account."[3]

Machiavelli held a different opinion, although he was much pleased with Vettori's letter, and wrote to him that it had made him forget his own unhappy circumstances. "I seem to have gone back to the complications that cost me so much useless labour, and on which I spent so much time. I think that the

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 304.
[2] "Opere," vol viii. letter xiii., of 9th of April, 1513.
[3] Ibid., vol. viii. letter xvi., of 21st of April, 1513.

Emperor and the Swiss be displeased; but this common fear of the Germans would be the cement binding the allies together."[1] On the other hand, Vettori desired that Sforza should remain at Milan, to prevent any undue growth of the power of France, of whom, unlike Machiavelli, he was no supporter. Neither did he entertain the same fear as his friend of the power of the Swiss in Milan, for he did not expect them to plant colonies and make conquests after the fashion of the Romans: "for them it suffices to rake in booty, pocket gold and return to their own land. If France leaves Lombardy, I behold Italy at peace, and on the death of the Catholic king, the crown will descend to a son of King Frederick,[2] and everything will be arranged on the old terms. Otherwise there is the risk that, owing to Christian discord, the Turk may fall upon us by land and by sea, drive these priests from their sloth and other men from their pleasures; and the sooner this came about, the better it would be, for you could not believe how unwillingly I tolerate the satiety of these priests, I don't say of the Pope, for were he not a churchman he would be a great prince."[3]

Vettori had the same superstitious fear of the Turks that Machiavelli felt of the warlike and conquering Swiss Republic; and besides, the latter by no means believed that the withdrawal of France would be the signal for peace and union in Italy. "As to the union of the Italians, you make me laugh; first, because there will never be any union that can do any good; and even were the heads united, they could do none, for there are no troops worth a farthing excepting the Spanish, and they are too few in number to suffice; secondly, because the tails are not united to the heads. . . . As to the Swiss being contented to make a raid and then take themselves off, let me pray you not to believe it, nor encourage others to build upon such notions." "All men, especially in republics, are at first contented with self-defence; then they proceed to take the offensive, and to seek to control other men. Thus at first it was sufficient for the Swiss to defend themselves from all would-be oppressors; then they gave their service for hire, the which has inspired them with an ambitious desire of ruling on their own account. They have now entered Lombardy under colour of re-establishing the Duke, but in fact are the rulers. At the first opportunity they will seize their pikes and act as masters, and then they will scour Italy. I know well that men like to live day by day, and do not believe that what has

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xviii., of 20th of June, 1513.
[2] Frederick of Aragon, who died in France in 1504.
[3] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xxii., fror Vettori, dated 5th of August, 1513.

pleased him very much at first, and still more when it was so splendidly confirmed by after events. Nevertheless his mind was not at ease, nor did he clearly perceive what course things would take. "Let who will be conqueror, either French or Swiss, and if that is not enough, let the Turk and all Asia come, and all prophecies be fulfilled at once, for to tell you the truth, I would that what has to be should happen quickly, and besides that which I have seen, I would willingly see farther. Nor should I be surprised if within a twelvemonth the Turk were to strike a great blow at this Italy of ours, and get these priests out of the way, upon which subject I will say no more at present." [1]

On the 12th of July he again recurred to general politics. "I should well like to be with you, to see if, in our minds, we could set this world straight, which seems to me a very difficult affair. The Pope desires to uphold the Church without diminishing his States, excepting for the purpose of aggrandizing his nephews. And this is proved by seeing how little thought these latter take of Florence, which is a sign that they have an eye to firmer States wherein they would not always have to think of managing men. The Emperor has never shown much strength, but is still so highly esteemed by princes, that I should have to hire out my brains in order to judge him as others judge him. He leaps from this war to that, from one treaty to another, in order to attain his object, which is to possess Rome and all the States of the Church, as true and legitimate Emperor. Thus much I gather from his own words spoken in my presence and that of others.[2] Spain wants to keep Castile and Naples; England is jealous of France; the Swiss, whom I rate higher than all the monarchs, desire possession of Milan. This being the state of things, I should like you to pen me a treaty of peace, stating who is to renounce part of his desires and in what fashion; since at present my chief business is to take rest, being weary of all things, even of books." [3]

Machiavelli's reply to this letter is not extant; but already on the 20th of June he had written what he thought upon the question now put to him. If I were the Pope, he said, I should have made an agreement with France, Spain, and Venice, giving to the first the kingdom of Naples, to the second the Duchy of Milan, and to the third Vicenza, Verona, Padova and Treviso. "Thus Milan would be freed of a counterfeit Duke, and only the

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xx. from Vettori, 27th of June, 1513

[2] Ibid., vol. viii. p. 65 Letter xx. Vettori's words on this subject also allude to the strange scheme attributed to the Emperor of wishing to become Pope.

[3] Ibid., vol. viii. letter xxi. from Vettori, dated 12th of July, 1513

judgment that a man can form." And if I doubt, he goes on to say, of your judgment as regards France, I am certain that you are deceived in your estimation of the Swiss. "Nor do I know what Aristotle may have said of confederated Republics; but I think rather of that which might reasonably be, that which is, and that which has been, and I remember to have read that the Lucumones held all Italy to the foot of the Alps, and until they were driven from Lombardy by the Gauls." Neither trust that the Italians will be able to do anything, for they would always have many leaders and leaders at odds among themselves. Much less, too, can they effect than the Swiss; because you must understand that the best armies are those of armed nations, nor can these be resisted save by armies like unto their own I certainly do not believe that the Swiss can found an empire as the Romans did, but I do believe that they may become the arbiters of Italy, and as this idea terrifies me I would fain find a remedy. "And if France suffice not, I can discern no other remedy, and will now begin to bewail with you our ruin and slavery, the which things may not come about to-day nor to-morrow, but will surely come in our time; and Italy will give all to Pope Julius, and to those who use no remedies, if indeed there be yet time to apply them."[1]

These remarks of Machiavelli pleased Vettori so much that, although he held contrary opinions, he laid before him on the 3rd of December, 1514, certain questions of contemporary politics, and at the same time gave him clearly to understand, that he hoped to do him service by exhibiting his replies to the Pope, or to the Pope's most trusted adviser. "Suppose," he said, "that France should wish to regain possession of Milan, and for that purpose should, as last year, league herself with the Venetians; while on the other side, the Emperor, Spain, and the Swiss were to join together. What, in your opinion, ought the Pope to do in such case? Discuss and pronounce your judgment on various courses and their consequences. I know you to have so much talent, that although two years have passed since you left business, I do not think that you will have forgotten your trade."[2] Machiavelli's reply, which is undated in the printed versions, was what might easily be expected from his previous letters. "In the present state of things," he wrote, "I believe that France might conquer; indeed she would undoubtedly conquer, were she joined by the Pope, who would have all to lose and nothing to win, in case he preferred allying himself with Spain and the Swiss. Were the latter victorious, he would be at their mercy, for they desire to rule Italy

[1] "Opere," vol. viii letter xxv, 26th of August, 1513.
[2] Ibid, vol. viii. letter xxvv. (from Vettori), 3rd of December, 1514

never been, can ever be, and always wish to reckon everything after one fashion. But, my gossip, this German torrent is so mighty that a mighty dyke is needed to stem it. We must have a care before they (the Swiss) take root and begin to taste the sweets of power, for then all Italy will be destroyed."[1]

Vettori replied to Machiavelli on the 20th of August, giving him a general sketch of the state of affairs, in order again to support his own theory. "The Emperor is, as usual, hopping from war to war, and from this to that contrivance; the Duke of Milan lets himself be carried wherever his stumbling fortunes bear him, and is like our carnival kings who know that at night they must descend to their former condition. As regards France, I was her adherent in past times, believing her to be useful to Italy and to Florence, which city I cherish above all else in the world: I love its houses, its walls, its laws, its customs, everything. Facts, however, have convinced me that the triumph of France was our hurt, and therefore I have changed my opinions. I do not, like you, think that Italians are to be considered worth no more than old iron, nor do I hold that the Swiss can ever become as the Romans were, for if you study politics well, and consider the Republics of former days, you will never find that a divided Republic like that of the Swiss is able to make any progress."[2]

But this was the very point that Machiavelli refused to concede, for he was full of enthusiasm for armed Republics, and still convinced that the French alliance was necessary to Italy. Nor was it easy for him even to accept the judgment of Aristotle. "We have," so he wrote on the 26th of August, "a sagacious Pope, who is also prudent, and held in respect; an Emperor who is unstable and fickle; a king of France who is wrathful and timid; a king of Spain who is petty and avaricious; the Swiss who are brutal, victorious and insolent; our Italians who are poor, ambitious and cowardly; as to the other potentates I know nothing of them. So that taking all these qualities into consideration, together with the things now hatching, I believe the friar who said *pax, pax, et non erit pax*, and I perceive that any peace is difficult, yours no less than mine. . . . But I doubt whether you can very quickly make out this king of France to be nothing, and this king of England to be a great thing. Nor can I settle in my head how it is that this Emperor should be so careless, the rest of Germany so neglectful, as to suffer the Swiss to come to such high reputation. And when I see that this is the fact, I shrink from judging anything, because this upsets every

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xxiii., 10th of August, 1513.
[2] Ibid., vol. viii. letter xxiv. (from Vettori), 20th of August, 1513.

centrated in these. We have learnt to know him as a man of action, but have still to become better acquainted with the thinker and writer, of whom we have only seen distant and fugitive glimpses, as it were, in the foregoing chapters.



and would therefore make him their slave: on the other side he would have the Spaniards in Naples If, instead, they were defeated, he would either have to go to Switzerland to die of starvation, or to Germany to be made a laughing stock, or to Spain to be tricked. If, in conclusion, the Pope were to join France, and the latter be victorious, I do not believe that she would hold him at ransom, since she would have to take account of the Swiss and the English still alert and still hostile. And even should the French be losers, the Pope could betake himself to their country, where he still owns a State where many of his predecessors have dwelt before him. To remain neutral would in any case be the worst course, since it would place him in the power of any one who conquered."[1] To this letter Machiavelli added another on the 20th of December,[2] for the better elucidation of several points, and then the same day likewise sent a third, almost as a postscript, to mention that this would be a suitable moment for trying to get him some place in the Pope's service either at Florence or elsewhere.[3] The two former letters were shown by Vettori to the Pope and to the Cardinals Medici and Bibbiena, who all admired them; but they led to no farther results.[4]

However, this was not enough to destroy all Machiavelli's hopes; on the contrary, he again renewed his request, but even then in vain. By the beginning of 1515 his correspondence with Vettori seems to have stopped, for we have very few letters of later years He must have finally wearied of the promises of a friend, who had always been more lavish to him of words than deeds. And on the other hand the literary labours to which he had dedicated his compulsory leisure now kept him fully employed. We may therefore bring the first part of this biography to an end, in order to begin the second with an examination of our author's doctrines and writings. For henceforth his life was almost entirely con-

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. letter xxxvii. An old manuscript copy of this letter has been found at Sienna, in the house of a priest named Toti, and dated, *20th of December*, 1514, *more fiorentino*. Professor Carlo Fossati Falletti considers the manuscript to be of the sixteenth century. The same date is also repeated in the well-known codex (lvii., 47, at p. 117) of the Barberini Library in Rome; but this must be an error, and the 10th of December the real date, since Vettori wrote on the 15th to say that he had received the letter on the 14th. "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 31.

[2] Ibid., vol viii. letter xxxviii, 20th of December, 1514.

[3] Ibid., vol. viii. letter xxxix., also 20th of December.

[4] Letters of Vettori, dated 15th and 30th of December, 1514, "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. Nos 31, 32. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix (II), document xvii.



BOOK THE SECOND.

FROM MACHIAVELLI'S RETURN TO PRIVATE LIFE AND STUDY DOWN TO HIS DEATH.

(1513–1527.)

St. Thomas and his disciple Egidio Colonna had formulated in their books, "De Regimine principum" and other works.[1] According to these doctrines, all things were necessarily subordinate to the Church and the priesthood, and secular authority and society were to render obedience to and be dependent on them. Nothing done by man in this world had any value, save as a preparation for that future life of which the secret and mystery were confided to the Church. The City of mankind must be subject and sacrificed to the City of God. History, like Nature, was the work of the Almighty, whose hand guided nations to triumph or destruction, without any power on the part of human will to check or change the predestined course of events. In the same relation as the body to the soul, as matter to mind, stood the temporal to the spiritual power. In short, the two swords, which at that time symbolized the two different powers, were to be grasped by the Vicar of Christ, whose authority came directly from God, and who was to command even the obedience of the Emperor, the representative of law and right, and purely human and earthly force. The latter, they said, resembled the moon, which has no light of its own, but receives it from the sun, to whom the Pope alone could be compared. And all writers of the Middle Ages repeated the same strange comparison, attributing to it the force of solid argument and rigorous demonstration.

In this political doctrine, morality naturally held a principal place, and all virtues were exalted and inculcated, since everything aimed at the triumph of religion. But it lacked all method and scientific character, and could not possibly be made to include them From the first page the writer had determined the end at which he sought to arrive; his reasonings were always abstract, *a priori*, metaphysical; his conclusions were never derived from the investigation of social and historic *data*, which he considered of little or no account. And this was natural, the human element being, as it were, suppressed. In God alone, in the *arcanum* of His mind and will, was to be sought the cause of all historical events, all social transformations. Therefore, by what scientific method was it possible to subject the will of God to direct analysis? Thus the political philosopher found himself in the same condition as the physicist, who, while recognizing God as the world's creator, should investigate the laws of nature, by no study of its phenomena, but by the sole contemplation and scrutiny of the Divine intellect. It was a logical necessity that this school should have

[1] It is well known that the treatise bearing this title, and attributed to St. Thomas, was only his in part See among other works Franck's "Réformateurs et publicistes." Paris, M. Lévy, 1864, p. 39 and fol.



CHAPTER I.

The political writers of the Middle Ages—The Guelph and Ghibelline schools—St. Thomas Aquinas and Egidio Colonna—Dante Alighieri and Marsilio da Padova—The fifteenth century—Savonarola and his treatise on the government of Florence—The learned men and their political writings—The Italian Ambassadors and their Legations—Francesco Guicciardini—His Legation in Spain, his political speeches, and his tractate "Del Reggimento di Firenze."



EFORE examining the works of Machiavelli, and more especially those which, as all know, inaugurated a new period in the history of political science and became the subject of such great and prolonged controversy, we must make at least a rapid survey of the condition of that science in the Middle Ages, and also of its progress during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries In this way we shall clearly recognize the depth of the change that political ideas and principles had already undergone, by the time Machiavelli appeared upon the scene, and shall be far better able to estimate the originality and worth of his doctrines.

The Middle Ages had had two great schools of Italian politicians, namely, the Guelph, and the Ghibelline: supporters of the Church and supporters of the Empire. Among the first, the best-renowned names were those of St. Thomas Aquinas and Egidio Colonna; among the second, and at a later period, those of Dante Alighieri and Marsilio da Padova. As in those days, the science being expounded in the Latin tongue and in scholastic form, had no national divisions, so the whole of Europe was long dominated by the same doctrines; and primarily by those which

Besides, he always cherished the mediæval dream of an universal Empire. For him the Emperor represented the unity of the human race, universal right and justice. He was to be Master of the entire world, for thus, having nothing more to desire or covet, he would have neither motive nor temptation ever to deviate from justice to all men. Nevertheless, as a modern writer has justly observed, Dante, while intending to write an apology of the Empire, and almost a prophecy of its renascence, wrote its epitaph instead. In fact, that which posterity has judged to be most remarkable and praiseworthy in the book "De Monarchia," are precisely those principles and novel tendencies which, together with the emancipation of the secular world, promoted unconsciously to the author, the destruction of the universal Empire, and the formation of the modern national State. And Henry VII. (of Germany), in whose favour he wrote, and in whom he placed such lofty hopes, may truly be said to have been the last of the mediæval Emperors.[1]

But even higher than the "Monarchia" of Alighieri soared the bold spirit of Marsilio da Padova in his "Defensor Pacis," which went much farther on the same road. It is almost incomprehensible how the book of a churchman, and one completed so early as 1327, could contain ideas of so daring a nature as to be only understood and carried into effect many centuries later. Assuming the defence of Louis the Bavarian, Marsilio plunged into the conflict with an ardour that was sometimes excessive. The aim of his work was the positive subjection of the Church to the Empire. In his opinion the Emperor should have the right of assembling the Council, and of deposing prelates and Popes, who ought to be in his dependence.[2] Up to a certain point we may believe all this to have been rather a consequence of party spirit than the result of deep scientific conviction. But when Marsilio, in starting an examination of the various orders of human activity, tries to determine the different social functions; when he clearly establishes the distinction between legislative and executive power, thus deviating considerably from the ideas of

[1] See "Dante e la letterature in Italia," in my "Saggi di Storia, di Critica e di Politica" Florence, Cavour Printing Office, 1868, p. 95 and fol. See also the excellent work of Mr. James Bryce, "The Holy Roman Empire." London, Macmillan, 1866. At page 291 the author remarks: "With Henry the Seventh ends the history of the Empire in Italy, and Dante's book is an epitaph instead of a prophecy."

[2] It is curious that Giuseppe Ferrari, who in his "Corso sugli Scrittori politici Italiani" (Milano, Manini, 1862), mentions with sometimes exaggerated praise all the defenders of Ghibelline ideas, should never speak of Marsilio da Padova, who was their principal champion.

the deepest contempt, not only for lay society, but also for the entire history of Pagan antiquity, in whose creed it could discern nothing but a mass of errors to be combated.

Thus, it is not surprising, that after a while a Ghibelline school should have arisen in Italy fiercely opposed to these teachings. Exactly as the Emperor had so often combated the Pope, so Ghibelline writers began to be daring supporters of the rights of the Empire. They could not become defenders of the State properly so called, namely the national State, since that was unknown to the Middle Ages, Church and Empire being equally universal; but substantially they were defenders of secular society in general. At the head of these writers stands Dante Alighieri with his volume "De Monarchia" With great and genuine originality he established the basis of human society on Right, to which he gave an inherent, independent value, that was also divine, since justice was willed by God, and His special attribute. Thus even the power of the Emperor was derived from God, and altogether independent of that of the Pope, who was to think solely of religion, and exact obedience in spiritual matters alone. The character, authority, and strength of the Empire—which should have its seat in Rome, and thus represent the independence of the secular world—were demonstrated by the entire history of ancient Rome For instead of contemning this, after the example of the theological school, Dante enthusiastically admired it, and even declared it to be a lasting miracle, wrought by God to achieve the victory upon earth of a species of new chosen people. In all this there was already a foreshadowing of the approaching triumph of classical learning, and the transformation that this would necessarily accomplish in the ideas of the Middle Ages But these new conceptions, notwithstanding their originality and daring, were still based upon thoroughly scholastic arguments. The Pope might not be compared to the sun, nor the Emperor to the moon, because the Empire and the Church were two accidental circumstances of the human race. And as man was created on the sixth day, the sun and the moon upon the fourth, it would ensue that God in creating the world must have followed an inverse and illogical order, providing for the accidental before the substantial. Most of the other arguments used by Dante in combating his antagonists were of the same kind. Indeed, he merely seized, one by one, on all the school syllogisms and sophistries of his opponents, to turn those against them by the same method, without perceiving that the fact of these arguments being equally useful either *pro* or *contra*, was sufficient to prove them worthless.

universal but national. And this because Marsilio started the question whether there should be one universal monarchy or whether there should be different States, according to the geographical and ethnographical conditions of different populations, and although the only answer he gave to the question was that it was an argument foreign to the theme of his book. But what then is the theme of the "Defensor Pacis"? An inquiry into the origin of the discord and contention prevalent in the world, in consequence of excessive ecclesiastical pretensions; to all of which the writer could perceive but one remedy—*i.e.* the total submission of the Church to the Empire. Therefore it was still the old struggle and the old mediæval dispute. Certainly the query propounded to himself by Marsilio, as to whether Monarchy should or should not be universal, proves that although he still belonged to the Middle Ages, he sought to escape from them. Nor can we presuppose the discovery of a new principle in a reply that was really nothing more than a simple reticence.

In short, although Marsilio may justly be called a prophet of the future, he was still bound to the Middle Ages and to the scholastic method. Not only was it a mediæval struggle in which he was plunged and for which he wielded his pen, but his method was constantly that of an abstract, arid, and metaphysical idealism; and his knowledge of history was in no degree superior, indeed often inferior, to the common acquirement of his times. He lacked the historic faculty, and had no conception of the natural development of institutions, which in his book seemed to be outside the boundaries both of time and space. The principal source of his wisdom was always Aristotle, whom he endeavoured to bring into harmony with the Scriptures; and this was undoubtedly the chief characteristic of scholastic teachings. The Italian Republics already erected into independent petty States, and the culture originated by them, had a considerable share in the formation of Marsilio's intellect and Marsilio's ideas. But these ideas came to him in the shape of convictions and feelings which may have been prophetic visions of the future, but were no results of a new scientific method, and still less of positive investigation of facts. His was a good Monarchy, such as was necessary at all times, and in all places; I might almost say that it was the abstract triumph of right and justice. Although finding its proper basis in the popular conscience, which is certainly an original thought of the author, nevertheless both Marsilio's people and Marsilio's monarch were still no better than abstractions. For thinkers of the Guelph school, the State was merged in the universal Church, for Marsilio, the Church became a function of the Empire, which,

Aristotle, who yet was his constant model, and attempts to rise almost to an organic conception of society and the State, then his originality is most undeniably displayed.[1] In his opinion, the legislative power should appertain solely to the people; since although the wisdom of the few is required to formulate laws, their labours must be sanctioned by the will of the many; by universal suffrage, which is the true basis both of the Empire and the Church. In short, the Monarchy of Marsilio is substantially an almost representative Republic, with a President elected by the people, who have equal right to depose him. The supreme authority of the Church resides only in the universality of the believers and in the Sacred Writings; and all coercive power, not only over the State, but also over heretics, is absolutely denied her All that the Church has any right to maintain with regard to these latter is, that if they profess dangerous doctrines they will suffer the everlasting pains of Hell in the life to come. It is the function of the Monarch or Emperor to punish them in cases where their heresies become hurtful to society.

Not only by the audacity of his ideas, but also by the limpidity, order, and precision of his reasoning, Marsilio soared far above all his contemporaries, including even Dante Alighieri. His language, it is true, was still confused and mediæval; but already in his pages the syllogisms and sophistries of the schools began to lose their value; the comparison to the sun and the moon, and others of the same kind, although not entirely absent, had neither the effect of confusing his intelligence, nor the logical march of his arguments. His work allows us to trace the transition between the scholastic lore and an independent political science, worked out by the visibly humanistic tendency of his mind. Nevertheless we cannot join in the extreme praise accorded to him by certain German critics, although their opinion is of great weight. They have not been content with proclaiming Marsilio da Padova to be a precursor of the Reformation by his ideas upon the Church; a precursor of the eighteenth-century spirit by his conception of the primal source of all power being with the people; and a precursor of the principles for which modern society is still combating, by his theory of the absolute dominion to be assigned to the State over the Church;[2] they have also tried to discover in his "Defensor Pacis" the conception of the modern State, no longer

[1] Neander in speaking of Marsilio's work, says: "Dieses in der That epochetmachende Werk" ("Allgemeine Geschichte der christlichen Religion und Kirche").

[2] Bezold and Riezler speak of this in the works that we shall have occasion to quote farther on

of crime. Nevertheless, these tyrants also created the embryo models of the modern States which were afterwards erected in Europe, and to which Italy taught the new system of politics that became an accomplished fact long before science succeeded in formulating it. At the same time the study of antiquity evoked in men's minds a presentment of the Pagan State, which, particularly as manifested in the history of Rome, succeeded by force of its vigorous unity, in bringing the individual, religion and everything else into subjection to itself. In this way the example of resuscitated antiquity helped to explain and illustrate the conception already embodied in the actualities of public life.

Nevertheless, the old mediæval science did not altogether vanish at once; it long lingered hidden in cloisters, and certain of its ideas occasionally percolated even into the new science. Thus, for instance, we find that there survived nearly everywhere the idea of an excellent prince, an idea that, supported by the double authority of the ancients and of the schoolmen, has in various shapes descended almost to our own times. Individual rule, when good, is the best of governments, as when bad it is the worst. This in the fifteenth century seemed to all an incontrovertible maxim. In fact, perfection is unity, cried the schools, and the neoplatonism of Ficino repeated the same cry with even greater emphasis. As there is only one God in the world, one sun in the planetary system, one head in the human and animal organism, so society requires unity, and finds perfection in the good monarch, who is almost the likeness of God, and can alone bestow good government on society.

Readers wishing to contrast these ideas in their purely mediæval shape with those which next arose and convinced every one, should study the treatise entitled "Del Reggimento del governo della città di Firenze," written by Savonarola, when he was superintending the organization of the new Republic. He expounds the conception of the good prince in a thoroughly scholastic manner, and describes the happiness of mankind under the rule of such a prince. He then procedes to describe the same government under a bad prince, and draws a graphic portrait of the tyrant, whom he tries to render as odious as possible, thus following the example of Aristotle and St. Thomas. But he afterwards abruptly remarks, that as men's wits are keen in Florence, a tyrant would be more hurtful there than elsewhere, and hence a Republic alone can be adapted to the nature of that people and yield good fruit; it is therefore willed by God. The force of every theory, of all abstract reasoning, disappears before

his reticences notwithstanding, always remained universal and abstract. Thus even the Ghibelline school, with all the daring and originality of its supporters, never succeeded in effecting its emancipation from the scholastic and theological method; was always in search of an ideal, metaphysical government; never dedicated itself to the study of any society in particular, in order to discover that which would be preferable and practical in a concrete case. Neither did it seek to define the special conditions of the Empire in the age of which it treated, for it aimed at an immutable form of excellent government, to be applied to all, without any consideration, or limits of place or time.[1]

Yet this was exactly what began to attract the attention of the Italian political writers of the fifteenth century. It is remarkable to note how, at that time, the entire political science of the Middle Ages seemed to have suddenly disappeared and another arisen totally differing from it both in substance and form. Yet there was nothing surprising in this when we consider that not only men's ideas had altered at that period, but that society itself was changed. Scholastic lore had been succeeded by erudition, the mediæval authority of a universal Church, an universal Empire, seemed now little more than a memory of the past; the Italian Republics, by the work of party-leaders, were going through a process of transformation in which the hand of man, the effects of prudence, astuteness, deceit and courage were only too plainly to be seen. Originally composed of numerous associations clumsily welded together, our Republics had been dependent on the Church or the Empire; but little by little they had achieved independence in every corner of the Peninsula, and later were rapidly changed into the principalities of tyrants who destroyed their liberty by the commission of every species

[1] Among those who have examined the above-mentioned writers, and the questions connected with their principal works with most thoroughness and exactitude, the following should be consulted:—A. Franck, "Réformateurs et publicistes de l'Europe," Paris, 1864; Sigmund Riezler, "Die Literarischen Widersucher der Papste zur zeit Ludwig des Baiers," Leipzig, 1874; F. von Bezold, "Die Lehre von der Volkssowerainetat, wahrend des Mittelalters" in the "Historische Zeitschrift" of H. von Sybel, year viii., No iv. Munich, 1876. See too vol. i. of Robert Mohl's work, "Die Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaften," in three vols. Erlangen, 1853-58 Gregorovius, in his "History of Rome," also furnishes important remarks and notices In conclusion we may quote an essay presented by Paul E. Meyer to the Faculty of Protestant Theology in Strasburg, the 25th of May, 1870: "Etude sur Marsile de Padoue," Strasbourg, Silbermann, 1870. This essay contains a careful exposition of the writings of Marsilio, of whom Meyer seems to be no great admirer. He chiefly dwells upon the fact that Marsilio, in subjecting the Church to the State, does not distinguish either their different attributes or their aims.

Principe"? That the prince should love justice and respect the Gods; be liberal, affable, clement, an enemy of flatterers, faithful to his word, strong, prudent, practised in the chase and in the use of arms; that above all, he should be the friend and patron of men of letters. Who can fail to perceive that this dissertation was nothing more than an exercise in rhetoric, when he proceeds to relate seriously to us how Pope Calixtus III, when threatened by Jacopo Piccinini, exclaimed that he had nothing to fear, since Rome contained three thousand *literati*, whose counsels and wisdom would enable him to repulse any army, however formidable!

And what does Poggio Bracciolini teach us in his dialogue "De infelicitate Principum"? That power and external prosperity cannot give man true happiness, which, indeed, only virtue can confer; and therefore it is necessary to pursue virtue rather than riches or power. He quotes historical examples to prove that the greatest monarchs were unable to avoid unhappiness. If a prince be bad, then he certainly cannot be happy; if good, then he is unhappy by reason of the heavy responsibilities, the infinite anxieties and troubles by which he is oppressed. Felicity, therefore, is only to be found in the dwellings of private citizens, who understand the worship of true philosophy. Who can imagine all this to be political science? Yet in the travels of the same Poggio, we meet with very admirable remarks, on the customs and institutions of England and Germany, similar to many to be found in the writings of Piccolomini, and numerous other learned men. In the diplomatic epistles of Pontano, all readers can recognize a high degree of practical sense and political insight. No one would suppose them to be written by the author of the tractates.

It was, indeed, in this way that the new science of politics gradually took shape. Erudition merely supplied the intellectual training necessary to create the science; but the first dawnings of the science itself were visible in the epistles and reports of ambassadors and statesmen, who, during the last decades of the fifteenth and the first of the sixteenth centuries, went on multiplying in a truly singular manner. In the despatches of Ferdinand of Aragon, signed by Pontano; in those of the Florentine ambassadors at the time of the coming of Charles VIII.; in those of the Venetians, and in their famous "Relazioni," as more or less in all the diplomatic writings of Italian governments and embassies, we find ourselves in a thoroughly new world. These writers had forsaken the Latin tongue; they no longer knew anything of scholastic doctrines; they observed and studied men

a question of simple expediency; and the writer goes on to treat of the manner of founding a Republic with Gonfalonier and Signory, with a Council of Eighty, and above all with a Great Council as in Venice, where it had produced such excellent results. Here, therefore, we have a practical policy, derived solely from examination of the actual conditions of Florence and the temper of its people; and we have it side by side and almost contrasted with the abstract policy of the Middle Ages, of which it was totally independent. But this was the work of Savonarola, who was a monk, and in whose mind there was a perpetual conflict between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance; whereas his contemporaries followed the new path, seeking for that which could be practically carried out, without at all troubling themselves concerning other things.

Whoever is really desirous of examining the natural transition from the one school to the other, is inevitably led to study the political writings of the learned men; and is soon compelled to pronounce them equally inferior to those of their predecessors, the schoolmen, as to those of their successors the *Cinquecentisti*. It is beyond all doubt that the literature of the Humanists produced, by the example of the Ancients, a new intellectual training, and inevitably paved the way for the examination of social facts on purely human and natural grounds. Both their letters and their books of travel abound in admirable descriptions of the manners and institutions of different peoples, together with valuable remarks on the causes of their decadence and regeneration We no longer meet with the eternal explanation of the hand of the Almighty guiding nations as a skilful driver may guide his fiery steeds; for now instead the writer sought and found the explanation of the facts he noted, in the temper of men, in their vices and in their virtues. Indeed, this new tendency of the mind may be said to be the sole genuinely original quality of the learned men, as political writers. For if we read the few treatises they have bequeathed us on this branch of knowledge, we find them to be rather collections of classical phrases regarding the virtues and vices of men in general and princes in particular, than genuine and special scientific tractates. Of this nature were certain of the works of Panormita, Platina, and many others.

Jacopo Pontano was not only a scholar of vast learning and a noble writer of Latin verse, but also a most sagacious politician and statesman, one of the chief ministers at the court of Ferdinand of Aragon, and hence well experienced in the management of weighty affairs. Yet what has he to tell us in his book "De

already pursued a long course of accurate study, and given proof of his admirable talent in his History of Florence, which has only been published in our own day. His Spanish mission was of little importance, since he was merely sent to offer friendly protestations for the purpose of calming the suspicions of the King, and had nothing to do beyond observing, collecting, and reporting intelligence. Besides this, his keen wits warned him of the changes so soon to take place in Florence; and being very anxious to avoid compromising himself in any way, he always sought to keep to generalities. From the beginning, he announced that Ferdinand the Catholic was decided to carry on no operations against the Pope; he described the plans conceived, and afterwards abandoned, of again sending the Great Captain to Italy, when the state of things seemed desperate for Spain; he narrated the coming of the English, and their displeasure when the King treacherously seized Navarre on his own account, and furnished many useful, clear, and detailed notices on the country and its government, which at once proved his marvellous faculty of observation.[1] These notices, however, are nearly always unconnected, being collected and recorded in a desultory way, and from time to time, as occasion required, without any effort on the author's part to arrange them in such order as to give a general and distinct conception of the general state of things, and of the character of the prince and the people, as Machiavelli constantly endeavoured to do in his reports. And this instantly marks the two writers' difference of temperament.

At this time Guicciardini also wrote for his own pleasure a "Relazione di Spagna," in which he tried to record and collect the principal observations occurring to him during his residence in that country, and in this composition also he followed the analytical method. He found the country to be thinly populated, with neither villages nor castles between one great city and another, but only waste lands. He had a very bad opinion of the Spaniards, who were, he said, proud of their nation, greedy of money, avaricious, little inclined to work, without industry, without literary culture, and were above all cunning and false. "Being cunning," he continued, "they make capital thieves. . . . Dissimulation is proper to this nation . . . and this dissimulation generates ceremonies and huge hypocrisy." It is certainly strange to hear so bitter a charge of craft and dissimulation from the lips of an Italian politician of the Borgian age, who at a later period was himself accused by his fellow citizens of the betrayal

[1] "La Legazione di Spagna" (1512–13) in the "Opere Inedite" of F. Guicciardini, vol. vi.

and men's political institutions with marvellous acumen, and with the most consummate experience. They investigated the causes of events, and of the conduct of statesmen upon a truly inductive and experimental method, which suddenly appeared common to all, without it being possible to say by whom it was first introduced, since it was in fact discovered by the nation at large. From time to time we meet with a few general considerations, always showing admirable clearness and penetration; but the narrative of special and urgent facts is speedily resumed, together with the discussion of the most secret items of intelligence, by which the minds of these writers were constantly preoccupied. In short, we may say that, in these official reports the form and method of the new science can already be discerned, although as yet only visible in detached fragments, almost seeming to ask to be woven together.

As a natural sequence, attempts were made to collect the scattered leaves of a doctrine that had sprung up among the affairs and realities of life, almost as the inevitable result of the new method of observing and studying the world. And this doctrine only required scientific arrangement and exposition in order to manifest its full splendour. Thus, it seemed to leap forth into sudden maturity, and as though unexpectedly sprung from the head of Jupiter, whereas, in truth, it had passed through long and laborious preparation.

For accurate knowledge of this school and its doctrines, it is requisite to give attentive study to the political works of Francesco Guicciardini. In these we find it even more clearly described and defined than in those of Machiavelli, for the latter, by force of the creative originality of his genius, introduced a personal element into it, and gave it his own stamp; whereas Guicciardini's originality, although doubtless considerable, was devoted to giving an exact and most lucid shape to the current doctrines of his day. These he developed, arranged, and enriched with the results of his prodigious experience, his large knowledge of men and public affairs, and with a degree of exactitude in observing, remembering, and recording facts, even superior to that of Machiavelli. For the latter was unduly absorbed in spinning theories and pursuing visionary ideals.

Like his contemporary and senior Machiavelli, Guicciardini began his career as political writer with ambassadorial reports. His first mission was to Spain; it was there that he gained his real initiation into the management of public affairs, and also composed a few other short works. He was sent there in 1511, when still under the legal age of thirty years; but he had

country so as to appear almost compelled to make it,[1] and thus persuaded every one that his only motive was the public good, even when he was acting from personal interest, or mere kingly ambition.[2] But this remark, being isolated and uttered as it were *à propos* to nothing, loses much of its general value. Thus, at every step we have occasion to notice the great difference between Guicciardini's gifts and those of Machiavelli, although, in certain aspects, they have many points of resemblance. The latter is a less patient observer; is less precise, less accurate, but he has the very rare faculty of instantly discerning, among a thousand facts falling under his notice, that which is really the principal point, and fixing his attention upon it. We have before seen how directly he found himself among the Swiss, their "free freedom," armed population, and simple habits served him as a starting-point whence to measure the strength and predict the fortunes of those miniature Republics. Also, when speaking to us of France and Germany, we have always beheld him seeking by the investigation of leading facts, what may almost be styled the specific weight, both political and military, of either nation, and by study of the present trying to divine the probabilities of the future. Guicciardini had no inclination for similar researches or predictions, and was disposed to regard them as idle speculations.

The object that he held constantly in view was the useful and practical solution, in public as in private life, of difficulties of actual occurrence, without troubling himself in the least as to possibilities more or less remote. With regard to the long meditated precepts dictated by his knowledge and experience, he followed them chiefly for the attainment of personal ends. From Spain he maintained a vigilant watch over Italian and especially Florentine events, of which his relations and friends continually kept him informed. When, however, the government of Florence was changed, and the enemies of the fallen republic (that had sent him to Spain to seek help against those very enemies) renewed his ambassadorial powers, he gladly accepted the fresh mandate. He even begged his father and brother to let him know the names of the new men in power, in order to gain their favour by offering his congratulations; and he accordingly wrote to all the Medici, and more especially to Leo X. as soon as the latter was chosen Pope. A rare master of the art of suiting himself to the times, it causes us no little astonishment to find in the "Memoirs," written by him at the age of thirty, and never intended for publication, a species of religious exhortation addressed to himself, in which

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. i. "Ricordi," lxxvii. and cclxxiii.
[2] Ibid., vol. i. "Ricordi," cxlii.

of his country. He recognizes the grand military qualities of the Spaniards, whom he finds most agile and daring; he has no great esteem for their men-at-arms, but praises their light cavalry, and speaks in the highest terms of the foot soldiers, who indeed afterwards at the battle of Ravenna proved themselves equal to the Swiss soldiery, then thought to be the best in the world. But this great military valour of Spain stirs him to no enthusiasm, nor even leads him to draw any general conclusions as to the present state or probable future of the nation, or its strength and inevitable destiny in the world. One day he inquired of King Ferdinand: How it was that so warlike a nation had always been conquered either entirely or in part, "by Gauls and Romans, Carthaginians, Vandals, and Moors?" The nation, replied the king, is very skilled in war, but is disorderly,[1] so that it can only do great deeds when ruled by one able to keep it in order and united. This, in fact, as Guicciardini rightly observes, was what Ferdinand and Isabella had done: they had humbled the grandees, suppressed revolutions, gathered into their own hands the extraordinary power wielded by the three knightly orders, and were thus enabled to urge Spain to great military enterprises. And in these Ferdinand had the singular good fortune of always making war with a semblance of justice, excepting only in the case of the iniquitous partition of the kingdom of Naples, for which there was neither excuse nor pretext of any sort.

From this it is evident that, as if of itself, a general conception was being formed of the real strength of Spain in those days, and of the extreme value of the national policy pursued by Ferdinand and Isabella. But Guicciardini does not follow it out; on the contrary, after an admirable analysis of special facts, he attributes the great results obtained rather to the monarch's good fortune than to his prudence or the military capabilities of his people.[2] Thus all is scattered in desultory remarks, and the "Relazione" itself is composed of detached paragraphs. Occasionally we find inserted in the "Ricordi," which are a collection of separate thoughts, a few general considerations that, if incorporated in the "Relazione," would have given it greater unity, by plainly showing how the rule of Ferdinand of Aragon testified to his consummate sagacity as well as luck. For Guicciardini observes in these "Ricordi" that whenever the king wished to undertake a war, he first of all inspired a strong desire for it throughout the

[1] Not very different was the reply, a few years ago, of a Spaniard to the questions of De Amicis: Ours is a fine nation, he said, but it has no government. De Amicis, "Spagna." Florence, Barbèra, 1878.

[2] "Relazione di Spagna" in the "Opere Inedite," vol. vi. pp. 271-97.

petent for office; since such men being unable to bargain with others on their own account, would be disinterested and would give impartial votes[1]

It was then thought that another main foundation of liberty consisted in granting equality to all citizens, and to all the right of sharing in the government; and accordingly Guicciardini and every Italian politician of the period declared it essential that public offices should be held in rotation, and, save with certain exceptions, never in perpetuity. For concerns being various, and various the ambitions that of necessity must be appeased, offices and their tenure should also be varied. Hence, first of all he would have a perpetual Gonfalonier: "since even in natural things there is seen to be perfection in the single number."[2] Here we have a distant allusion to philosophical and abstract theories; but Guicciardini does not follow it up. He was unversed in scholastic learning, and had no love for philosophy; had been trained in jurisprudence, on which, however, he rarely touched in his political works, and soon reverted therefore to practical questions. The present moment, the passing hour, actual possibilities, were the points on which his attention was continually fixed Hence his desire that the perpetual Gonfalonier should be kept in check by a Signory, invested with great authority, and by a Senate composed of from 160 to 180 citizens, some for life, some for fixed periods: the former, in order that they might have lengthened experience, the latter in order to preclude all excess of power, and that many might be raised in turn to the Senatorial dignity. On this point he proved himself superior to the prejudices of his day, and even to the traditions of the school to which he belonged. As is generally known, it had always been strictly prohibited in the Councils of the Florentine Republic to combat any law that was proposed. To vote against it was allowed, or to speak and vote in its favour; but speaking against a law was forbidden under penalty of exile or imprisonment. Guicciardini, on the contrary, had the sagacity to declare that, although it might be dangerous to allow free discussion in the Great Council, where numbers might cause confusion, it was not only necessary but advantageous in the Senate; and that its constant prohibition in Florence had been tyranny, instead of liberty. Discussion might give birth to maturer deliberations, would bring the best men to the front, and confer on them the power they deserved. "And what," he exclaimed, at last giving way to a burst of enthusiasm, "what can a generous mind better desire, than to find himself at the head of a free city, and to have

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. ii. pp. 270, 271. [2] Ibid., p. 272.

he urged himself to lead a worthier life; to make a good use of the gifts received from God, and of the lofty offices conferred upon him by his fellow-citizens; and to observe such conduct in spiritual matters, "that God in His loving-kindness may bestow on thee that share of Paradise, that thou thyself desirest in the world."[1] In reality, however, it is evident that even in this matter he wished to behave with such prudence as to enjoy both this world and the next without making any sacrifice.

Of his easy mutability we find proofs in two of the various "Discorsi" written by him in Spain. In the first, composed shortly before the battle of Ravenna, he discusses the method of reorganizing and strengthening the popular government of Florence; in the other, written soon after, that is, just on the return of the Medici, he treats instead of the method of strengthening and establishing their power.[2] In the first he begins by remarking, that the temper and corrupt living of the Florentines were ill-adapted to a good Republic; and that to make the citizens what they should be, "it would be requisite to mass all things together, giving them an entirely new shape, even as in manipulating substances to be eaten in a paste."[3] Nevertheless, granting things to be as they are, he seeks for the most judicious measures. Above all he would have a good militia, effecting improvements in that Ordinance which had been instituted after much opposition and earned universal applause, but regarding which he had never entertained the same lofty visions as Machiavelli. In his judgment, "government was based upon force, and to desire a government without arms was to desire an army without its proper weapons; since State and dominion are nothing more than violence done to subjects, though palliated in some cases by certain pretensions to honesty."[4] Also, liberty is nothing more than the preponderance of public law and order over the appetites of individual men; therefore it should have for its basis a General Council, wherein the assembled citizens could sanction laws and elect their magistrates This latter function was then, in the eyes of all Italian politicians, the true and only safeguard of every free government. All depended upon arranging matters in such wise that the election of magistrates might be conducted in the best mode for the public good; and therefore all kinds of ingenious devices were invented to secure it from corruption. To this end Guicciardini proposed the admission to the Council even of those who, owing to their youth or other reasons, were legally incom-

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol x. p 89. These words were written, as he noted: "In Spagna l'anno 1513." (In Spain, year 1513.)
[2] Ibid, vol. ii p. 262 and fol.
[3] Ibid, vol ii. p. 263.
[4] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 267.

wider brain than Giannotti and many others; and accordingly did not fail to observe the weak side of all these theories and the insufficiency of this method. Indeed, from time to time he shook off the swathing bands of the schools, and displayed ideas of higher elevation and daring resembling unexpected flashes of light. Nevertheless, his indifference, disgust, and almost contempt for all theories speedily threw him back in the beaten path from which he so seldom strayed, but whereon he contrived to gather many true and subtle observations upon mankind and its institutions. At the close of his discourse he again reiterates that in reality all depends upon the nature and character of the people, hence that no reforms can be successfully effected in Florence, unless it were first possible to radically improve the Florentines. By the measures he proposed, all that could be achieved would be a barely tolerable Republic; "to render it thoroughly good, would need," he tells us, "the blade of Lycurgus, in order to extirpate our weakness, our greed for gain, and vainglory, as these were extirpated by Lycurgus in Sparta. This, however, is a thing we may admire or wish, but cannot hope to obtain for ourselves." And he again recurs to small reforms, concluding by suggesting a law against feminine luxury, and another for the reduction of marriage dowries, the laws so frequently but fruitlessly proposed and sanctioned in the Republic of Florence.[1]

The other discourse, written in October, 1512, treats of the state of parties in Florence, and the method of firmly establishing the government of the Medici, whose triumph had been already effected.[2] These men (the Medici), says Guicciardini, may not longer hope to win the goodwill of a people so long enamoured of liberty, therefore they must devote themselves to forming a narrow circle of secure and trusty friends, among whom they may divide the highest offices, and on whom they may confer such favours as to make their fate inseparable from that of the new government. Soderini had fallen through trying to rule a Republic by means and methods opposed to liberty, namely by concentrating the government in the hands of a few adherents; in the same way the Medici would fall, should they persist in ruling in a manner suited to a free government, namely by allowing many to participate in the administration, with the hope of thus gaining the suffrage and support of the mass of the citizens.

Perusal and comparison of these two discourses lead to the inquiry: whether Guicciardini was a republican or a friend of the Medici, a supporter of freedom or of tyranny? To himself this

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. ii. pp. 311, 312.
[2] Ibid., "Discorso" iv. pp. 316-24.

reached that position solely by having gained a reputation for prudence and patriotism? Happy the Republics which teem with ambitions such as these, for of necessity, qualities leading to these honours will flourish among them, namely, virtues and good works."[1]

Substantially, the government desired by Guicciardini was nothing more than a machinery by which it was sought to balance different ambitions, and cause the advantages of a monarchy, an aristocracy, and a democracy to exercise a reciprocal action by means of the Gonfalonier, Senate, and Great Council. It was the mixed government, the dream and quest of all our political writers, to whom it had been bequeathed by the ancients, and particularly by Polybius,[2] although they endeavoured to modify it in various ways, according to the varied conditions of our Republics. That the government should be adapted to the nature of the people for which it was intended, was a conviction that had grown general during the Renaissance. But it had not yet been discovered that a government must be the spontaneous outcome of the popular history and the popular conscience, and that in order to impose it upon society, more was required than for it to have been first harmoniously arranged in the brains of men of thought Neither was it understood that it was a mistaken idea to regard the political life of a nation and its government as a simple game of personal passions and interests which were either to be bridled or satisfied. Donato Giannotti, one of the purest of Florentine patriots, and one of the last representatives of this school, passed his entire life in studying the mechanism of Venetian government, in order to use its example for the benefit of that of Florence, which he minutely describes to us. But he had an unvarying standard of selection and reform, holding that institutions should be moulded and ordered in such wise as to satisfy all ambitions, the which ambitions and passions were for him solely and wholly political. Some men, he says, desire to stand in the front rank; others, and in greater number, are content with some share of power and authority; while the majority desire equality, liberty, and justice. Hence the necessity of tempering democracy with aristocracy and monarchy; therefore the Gonfalonier must be held in check by the Signory, Senate, and Great Council.[3] Such were the arguments at that time continually repeated by all.

Guicciardini, however, had a far more penetrating vision, and far

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. ii. pp. 303, 304.
[2] In the fragments of bk vi. of the "Storie."
[3] Giannotti, "Opere." Florence, Le Monnier, 1850, two vols.

government is that of a single ruler when the ruler is worthy, and then quickly digresses from this theory, with a remark from one of the interlocutors, to the effect that in Florence there were only the Medici from whom it would be impossible to hope for any good thing, since they had seized upon the government by fraud and violence and against the will of the people. At this point Bernardo del Nero, the same who in 1497 was condemned to death for conspiring in their favour, assumes the defence of the Medici and of principalities in general. He says that he cares neither to know nor dispute upon the species of government; but that he rather seeks to know what effects it has brought about where it has been established, inasmuch as governments are intended for the welfare of the citizens at large, not to satisfy the ambitions of those in command or desirous of command. Cities were instituted for the common good, and their chief bond consists in the mutual goodwill of the citizens for whom justice is the primary and principal necessity. Men are by nature inclined to good, when undistracted by self-interest; and if a few lapse into purposeless evil, these few deserve to be called beasts rather than men. Now a popular government, continues Bernardo del Nero, cannot be the best adapted to the above end, since it is always weak, uncertain and liable to change, whereas a principality is stronger, readier, more secret in the conduct of affairs, and also more intelligent, prudence being a virtue of the few, not of the many. Other interlocutors combat his assertions on the score that government is thus restricted to mere utility and private interest. Justice, they add, is not all sufficient; honour and glory must also be sought.

But they do not long enlarge upon this or other theoretical arguments, and soon go back to blaming the conduct of the Medici, the many evils inflicted by them upon Florence, and the greater evils they would inflict if recalled after having been driven away. And on this question of expediency, the only one by which the speakers are roused to any true fervour, they all come to an agreement. Bernardo del Nero, in fact, winds up by saying: "At any rate the Medici have been expelled, and we cannot wish them back again; for even had they once been worthy they would return unworthy. Let us then seek for the best form of popular government, the only kind now opportune and possible in Florence" After this he begins to expound and argue in favour—though with some slight modifications—of the same form of Republic that we have seen proposed in the first discourse examined by us. Three things, he adds, must be mainly kept in view; namely, justice for all, defence of freedom and mature deliberation on questions of the highest importance Accordingly a Great Council, with power of

would have seemed an empty question. His science, his art of living in the world, consisted in successfully making his way under any government, and he tells us this plainly and unhesitatingly. His discourses, his meditations, all aimed, through study of men and things, towards the discovery of a sure means of keeping that way constantly open. In the retirement of his study and with pen in hand, when writing for his own satisfaction and without any thought for the public, he openly acknowledged to himself that of course liberty was preferable to despotism, and was naturally desired by men. He perceived that in Florence no government, save that of a popular Republic, could be established without violence; and for this reason he told the Medici that to assure their power they must use force. Neither his own character, inclinations, nor mental training inclined him to place confidence in the people, and he would have therefore preferred to give a restricted form even to the Republic, by entrusting it to a few *ottimati* And this is another point upon which Guicciardini constantly differed from Machiavelli, who was always opposed to the *ottimati*.

The same ideas are still more clearly expressed in the treatise "Del Reggimento di Firenze."[1] This title, however, must not lead the reader to suppose that it contains a development of the author's general theory of government, it merely serves, on the contrary, for the ampler exposition, in more logical and scientific order, of the ideas comprised in the first discourse to which we have referred It is a dialogue, composed indeed at a much later period, but feigning to have been held in the year 1494, after the expulsion of the Medici, between their ardent partizan Bernardo del Nero, Piero Guicciardini, the writer's father, Paolo Antonio Soderini, and Piero Capponi. The preface opens with an apology for writing in favour of a free government, after having served Leo X. and Clement VII., and accepted benefits at their hands. But the resolves and desires of men are different, he says, from considerations on the nature of things; truth stands on a footing of its own, and duties towards our country are in all cases greater than those to private individuals. This work also was among those only published in our own day, and it is really singular that a man so self-interested and ambitious as Guicciardini should have had a love of letters, sufficiently lively and disinterested to lead him to compose so many works, with no object beyond the gratification of a purely intellectual need. But it is exactly this that enhances the value of these works in the eyes of all who wish to comprehend the writer's real opinions and convictions.

The dialogue therefore starts by noting, as usual, that the best

[1] "Opere Inedite," vol. ii pp. 1–223.

And this I have desired to say, not indeed to pronounce judgment on these very difficult points, since he who wishes to live entirely after God, may do ill in not withdrawing afar from the life of the world, and may live badly according to the world without offending God; but to speak as the nature of things truly requires, since occasion has drawn us into an argument, that may be fittingly carried on between us, but could neither be discussed with others, nor in a larger company."[1]

In this chapter, therefore—after starting from the point in which all was subordinated to morality, justice, and religion, but all remained in the abstract without taking into consideration either real events, history, or the nature of mankind and society—we have arrived at another point, in which political science is founded on a rational examination of these facts, but is brought into contradiction with religion and morals, thus leaving a profound dissonance in the mind of man, who has but one conscience and cannot have two This dissonance, begun in the fifteenth century, has endured to the present time; since we have not entirely succeeded in suppressing it either in practice or in theory. The Middle Ages had solved the arduous problem, by sacrificing the earthly to the heavenly home; but the doctrine of the Middle Ages was an abstraction, taking no heed of reality, and lacking all efficacy in guiding the conduct of men or governments, which both remained ferocious and bloodthirsty, while listening to the exhortations of theological mysticism. The fifteenth century, on the other hand, tried to follow the dictates of experience, and let itself be ruled by reason, as represented to its eyes by the philosophy of the ancients. Accordingly so long as it was only a question of private virtue or of virtue in the abstract, the fifteenth century, by means of neo-Platonism, succeeded in bringing Christianity and antiquity into harmony with each other, namely, by finding a rational and natural basis for that which religion had imposed only as a divine and revealed command. And this seemed a great triumph. But on coming to the examination of public and political virtues, the dissonance was speedily made clear. Antiquity gave the idea of the State, exalted country and freedom, prescribed even bloody extermination of the country's foes, commended the murder of tyrants. On the other hand, the Gospel taught a universal religion; spoke neither of State nor country, inculcated precepts of charity, modesty and abnegation, observed by none in public life, since *according to the nature of things*, as Guicciardini said, it would have been most perilous for any one to attempt scrupulous observance of such precepts in the

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol ii. pp. 210-12

election to supreme offices, is what above all is required. And in order to prevent the more ambitious from seeking popular favour both by honest and dishonest means, the choice of the Ganfalonier should not be left to the Council, but merely the right of suggesting three names to the Senate, who would then make the final choice. The Senate was to be composed of one hundred and fifty sagacious and prudent members, with full liberty of discussing and maturing their decrees. And thus Del Nero's exposition goes on, but, to avoid repeating things already mentioned, need not be given here.

Then follow a few remarks on the history of Rome and its civil wars, showing that Guicciardini had given keen and prolonged attention to that difficult subject. At the close of the dialogue we once more meet with a few considerations which again and still more clearly prove that at the bottom of his soul he still entertained certain grave doubts as to the very basis of his doctrines, and that he avoided dwelling much upon these doubts, because he saw no practical use in their full discussion, when unable to find a scientific issue. In speaking with Piero Capponi of the Pisan war, Bernardo del Nero observes, that the Florentines will never succeed in winning the friendship of the Pisans, and therefore, in order to reduce them, they ought either to kill all prisoners, or at least keep them in confinement until the war came to an end; and that they should take no alarm even if, in reprisal, the same fate were inflicted on their own soldiers. This advice, he says, may appear cruel and unconscientious, and is so in truth. "But whoever in these days wishes to maintain States and dominions, should, when possible, act with mercy and goodness; but whenever this is not possible, with cruelty and remorselessness. And for this reason thy great grandfather Gino wrote in those last 'Records' of his: that the Council of Ten for war should always be composed of persons who loved their country better than their souls;[1] because it is impossible to regulate government and States, if desirous of maintaining them as they are at present maintained, according to the precepts of Christian law. Certainly," he continues, "no good reason can be alleged wherefore in the one case conscience may be obeyed, while in the other it may be disregarded.

[1] "Ricordi di Gino di Neri Capponi in Rerum Italicarum Scriptores," tom xviii. Mediolani, 1731, col. 1149: "Choose for the Ten of Balia practical men who love the Commune better than their own welfare and their own souls." The good Muratori holds that these words savour of impiety, *impietatem sapiunt*, and therefore tries to believe that the word soul is here used "ad significandam aut more Hebræorum *vitam*, aut intensiorem et delicatiorem illum animæ curam" (Præf. col. 1101). But the same words, in their true and clear signification, as they are here interpreted by Guicciardini, are also reported in Machiavelli's "Storie."

It is continually repeated in the "Ricordi" that it is a great error "to wish to speak of the affairs of the world in general terms and according to fixed rules; since nearly all admit of exceptions, such as may only be noted down in the *book of discretion*.[1] Theory is very different from practice, and many who can comprehend the former are unable to carry it out.[2] Neither is it useful to speak by examples, inasmuch as every small modification in each special case leads to considerable variation of results.[3] Therefore those are greatly in error (and here it is evident that he alludes to Machiavelli) who always cite the example of the Romans. It would be necessary to have a city in the same conditions as theirs, in order to be able to govern on their plan."[4] But elsewhere he asserts, without noticing that he is copying one of the general maxims of Machiavelli whom he had contradicted: "That past things shed light on future things; for the world was always of the same sort, and all that which is and will be, has been in former times; and the same things return, but under different names and colours; therefore not all men can recognize them, only he who has wisdom observes and considers them diligently."[5] He again copies from Machiavelli in those other "Ricordi" where he speaks of the power of chance, and observes how important it is for every man to fall upon times to which his special abilities are suited, and in which they are understood and appreciated. Could men change their natures according to the times, which is very difficult, if not impossible, they would be far less dominated by chance.[6] But whereas Machiavelli dwells on these observations, bases a general law on them, and constructs general maxims serving as the foundation of a new science, Guicciardini merely notes them and proceeds to other subjects.

Even in his "Ricordi," the latter repeats "that States cannot be maintained according to conscience, because, excepting in the case of Republics in their own country (or in their capital cities), all governments are violent; not excluding that of the Emperor, and still less of the priesthood, whose violence is twofold, being carried out by the spiritual as well as the temporal arm."[7] Also the subjects of a Republic, that is to say, all who are not citizens of the dominant city, are in worse case than those of a prince,

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. i. "Ricordo" vi. cclvii and cccxliii.
[2] Ibid., "Ricordo" xxxv.
[3] Ibid., "Ricordo" cxvii.
[4] Ibid., "Ricordo" cx.
[5] Ibid., "Ricordo" cccxxxvi.
[6] Ibid., "Ricordo" xxxi. See, too, the preceding one.
[7] Ibid., "Opere Inedite," vol. i. "Ricordo" xlviii. The whole of the "Ricordo" is repeated in the treatise "Del Reggimento di Firenze," p. 211.

government of States. Hence the origin of the conflict that we have long seen waged in numerous forms, not alone in literature and science, but even in real life We have beheld it exemplified in Girolamo Olgiati, when, stirred by study of the classics to vengeance on the oppressor of Milan, he besought the forgiveness of St. Ambrose for being about to stain his altar with blood, and implored him to vouchsafe success to the blow that was to annihilate iniquity. On being led to the scaffold, Olgiati invoked the Holy Virgin and recited Latin distiches in praise of tyrannicides. We have also seen another example in Pietro Paolo Boscoli, who declared himself ready to face death with fortitude, for love of liberty, under the inspiration of the Greek and Roman philosophers, but was unable to die for the cause as a good Christian. Upon the ruins of the Middle Ages a conception of State and country was being built up of fragments of resuscitated antiquity, and this seemed to erect itself in opposition to the idea of Christian morality.

Guicciardini perceived this conflict of his age, and noted it as a fact, without attempting to explain it; saying, indeed, that it was best spoken of under the breath and to few hearers. He fully understood that by this plan his counsels and political maxims, notwithstanding their truth, sagaciousness, and practicality, became nothing more than simple observations, palliatives, and tricks for the wiser or less wise guidance of the social machine, apart from all radical reform, or the creation of any new system of political science or moral philosophy, and still less of any new State or new people. But he neither hoped nor desired to entertain aims of so lofty a nature. System he did not seek, daring hypotheses were not to his taste; he merely gathered the fruit of his own and others' daily experience, noting down his ideas as they occurred to him, without trying to shape them into an organic unity, under any principle or maxim of a more general order. Of course this method had its weak side; but, on the other hand, it afforded him the immense advantage of being able to lay his observations before others in their genuine and practical form, with the same spontaneity with which they had presented themselves to his mind, and without any modification for the sake of giving them a systematic arrangement. Therefore, it is precisely in his "Ricordi politici e civili," that the qualities of his intellect are displayed with the most enviable and unequalled lucidity. It would be hard to find anywhere in modern literature another series of maxims and sentences revealing, as this reveals, the whole political and moral structure, not of one individual alone, but of an entire century.

the same calmness, however, he remarks, that it is sometimes advisable to take revenge, even without feeling any rancour; "because the example is a lesson to others not to offend you; and it is very well that you should revenge yourself and yet bear no rancour of mind towards him on whom you wreak your revenge."[1] And he likewise advises that we should persistently deny that which we do not wish to be known, and affirm that which we would have believed, because, notwithstanding every proof to the contrary, we are nearly always successful in the end.[2] His virtue, therefore, is a mere virtue of expediency, serving only for the better concealment of profound egotism. Neither does Guicciardini use any arts to deceive his readers; indeed, no one could speak more plainly in his writings. He exhibits himself to us without any disguise: "No one can have a stronger detestation than mine for the avarice, ambition, and sloth of the priesthood. . . . Nevertheless, the position I have always held with several pontiffs, has compelled me to love their greatness for my own advantage; and but for this consideration I should have loved Martin Luther as myself, not for the purpose of freeing myself from the laws introduced by the Christian religion, as it is generally interpreted and understood, but in order to see this herd of wretches reduced to their proper condition, namely that of being left either without vices, or without authority."[3] And this idea, and others of the the same kind, are continually repeated by him with the same frankness[4]

What, then, could be done with this man, justly styled by De Sanctis, the man of Guicciardini, and who was likewise the man of the Italian Renaissance, that made his own entity (*particolare*)[5] the centre of the universe? Given such a man, what society, what State could be formed? Nothing but a society in which individual interests would be balanced by reciprocal limitations, and various ambitions gratified in the best way and with just moderation. Hence the endeavour to devise machinery and regu-

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. i. "Ricordo" lxxiv

[2] Ibid., "Ricordo" xxxvii.

[3] Ibid., "Ricordo," xxviii.

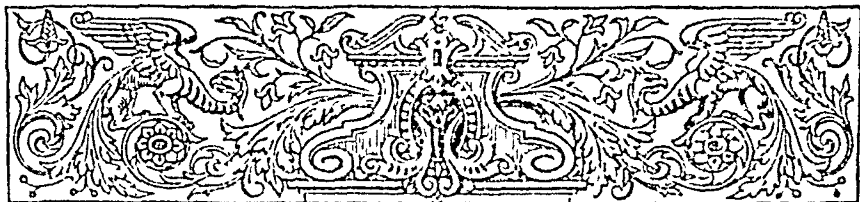
[4] Ibid., "Ricordo" cccxlvi See, too, "Ricordo" ccxxvi.

[5] "Nuovi Saggi Critici" of Francesco De Sanctis. Naples, Morano, 1872, pp. 203–228. See also "Une autobiographie de Guichardin d'après ses œuvres inédites," by Professor A. Geffroy in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," 1st February, 1874. Mons. E. Benoist's work, "Guichardin historien et homme d'Etàt Italien au XVIme. Siècle" (Paris, 1862), appeared before the publication of the greater part of the "Opere Inedite," and has therefore no great value. Recently Signor Carlo Gioda has published a large volume entitled "Guicciardini e le sue opere inedite," Bologna, Zanichelli, 1880 In this the author gives a summary of the "Opere Inedite," accompanied by a very minute commentary.

"since the Republic grants no share of its grandeur to any but the citizens of its chief city, while oppressing all the others; the prince treats all in the same manner, and considers all equally his subjects; therefore, every subject may hope for bounty and employment at his hands."[1] Now this is a general, true, and profound remark, displaying the weak side of the mediæval Republics, and the cause of their inevitable decay, and showing why they never succeeded in founding a modern State, without passing through the phase of despotism. But the author does not even seem conscious of the full value of what he has observed, and passes on. He displays his scantiness, or rather lack of sympathy for the people: "To speak of the people is to speak of madmen, for the people is a monster full of confusion and error, and its vain beliefs are as far from truth as is Spain from India according to Ptolemy"[2] Still, this by no means prevents him from speaking ill of the despotism of which he was on several occasions a supporter: "The cement walling in the States of tyrants, is the blood of citizens; therefore every man should labour to prevent his own city from having palace walls of that kind."[3]

Yet we must not take this as an instance of self-contradiction. Guicciardini aims at nothing more than the description of the world, with the thousand changing aspects in which he beheld it; his studies chiefly tend to inquiry into the mutable nature of man, and to the discovery of the art of keeping him in subjection. But what in short is the human being that he studies so earnestly, both as he really is, or as, according to Guicciardini, he ought to be? He would have him virtuous, because virtue is beautiful, confers renown, and all are by nature disposed to it, unless (of course) personal interest should come into play, to which all men necessarily succumb. "Sincerity pleases and wins praise, dissimulation is censured and hated; the former, however, is more useful to others than to oneself, and therefore I should praise him whose usual mode of life was open and sincere, and who only used dissimulation in certain things of great importance; and it then succeeds all the better, the more one has contrived to establish a reputation for honesty."[4] He recommends the sentiment of pride and honour, to which he professes to have always been keenly alive, declaring actions to be deadly without that stimulus.[5] With

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," "Ricordo" cvii.
[2] Ibid., vol. i. "Ricordo" cccxlvi.
[3] Ibid., "Ricordo" ccxlii.
[4] Ibid., "Ricordi" civ. and cclxvii
[5] Ibid., "Ricordi" cxviii. and cccxxvij.



CHAPTER II.

The "Prince" and the "Discourses"—Religious reform and the new State—Machiavelli's paganism—His republican faith—Machiavelli and Aristotle—The State according to Machiavelli's ideas—His method—Political science in Greece, and during the Renaissance—The Discourses.



URING the year 1513, in order to avoid suspicion and annoyance, Machiavelli very seldom quitted his villa to come down to the city. Weary of the solitude and forced idleness to which he was condemned, weary of waiting for employment that never came, he soon devoted himself to study with the utmost ardour. For it was in this year that he undertook the two works upon which his renown as a political writer chiefly rests; namely, the "Principe" and the "Discorsi" Indeed, the former was completed by the month of December, at which time he was engaged in giving it the final touches.[1] He worked for some time

[1] See Letter xxvi in the "Opere," vol. viii. p 93 and fol. In this, after relating to his friend Vettori how he had composed his work, Machiavelli goes on to say · "Filippo Casavecchia has seen it; can tell you all about the thing itself, and the conversations I have had with him on it, although I am still employed in fattening and repolishing it" (p 96). This celebrated letter was found in the codex lviii 47, of the Barberini Library in Rome, and bears date 10th of October, 1513, as was noted in page xxxvii of the preface to the "Opere," whose editors were the first to publish it. This date we have personally verified, but the editors of the "Opere," afterwards, and without giving any reason for the change, printed the letter with the date of the 10th of December. We believe the reason of this to be that Francesco Vettori only acknowledged the receipt of this letter in his own of the 24th of December, while in a previous letter, dated 23rd of November, he states that the last letter received by him from Machiavelli was that of the 26th of August, containing the fable of the lion and the fox. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix (II) document xvii

lations of increasing complexity, which in the end had always to be maintained by fraud or force. No conception of lofty social aims, nor of a living organism of the State was possible under these circumstances; and neither was there any possibility of genuine public integrity. Worse still, all this reacted even upon private life, its effects had already long been visible on the Italian conscience, on Italian manners and Italian literature, and it was to be feared that all would go from bad to worse. In order to reconstruct the political and moral world on a more solid basis, it was first of all necessary to be able to improve men's minds, giving them a different nature and a different character, "even as those who knead edibles to a paste, thus giving them any shape that is desired." But for this was needed "the blade of Lycurgus to extirpate our sloth, our greed, and our vainglory." Now this blade of Lycurgus, that was to permanently redeem the country, was, in Guicciardini's judgment, nothing but an unrealizable dream in those days; while on the other hand it was the continual and constant hope of Machiavelli, the hope to which, as we shall see, he dedicated his most earnest thought, and most zealous study.



ment to some of the maxims only touched upon in the "Discourses," but thoroughly unfolded in the former work.

Although the "Prince" was completed some time sooner, we will first speak of the "Discourses,"[1] since in these its germ is already to be found, and may even be said to be in relation with the whole system of the author. Also, it is now time to say something of this system, or rather of its fundamental conceptions and general tendency. From the first pages of the "Discourses" it is very easy to see that Machiavelli was treading a road entirely different from that followed by Guicciardini, Giannotti, and other writers. He did not ask himself, What is the form of government best adapted to Florence? What should be the attributes of the Gonfalonier, the Signory, and the Ten, and in what manner should they be elected? What should be the composition of the Senate and the Great Council; how should these institutions be balanced so as to gratify all the restless ambitions of the Florentines? On the contrary, that which Machiavelli sought to investigate was from what causes nations rose and prospered or became corrupt and fell into decay, how they ought to be governed, and above all in what way a strong and durable State might be established. Even the language he used, clearly indicates the great distance separating him from Guicciardini. In Machiavelli's writings we continually meet with the words: "*and this must be held as a general rule;*" whereas Guicciardini, as we have seen, is equally insistent in repeating that in human affairs no general rules hold good; that it is all very well to inscribe general rules in books, but that in practice "*long experience and worthy discretion*" are alone of any use. Machiavelli aimed at the creation of a new science, and had the faith required for attempting the difficult enterprise suggested to him and almost rendered indispensable by the actual condition of the human mind and society. The aim of Guicciardini was to take advantage of circumstances, and make his own way in the world.

The man of the Italian Renaissance, dominated as he was by

the sentence quoted. The first gives it in this shape: "I will leave aside speaking of Republics, since on another occasion I spoke of them at length." Another and synchronous copy in the Barberini Library at Rome, cod lvi. 7, also contains the same quotation.

[1] In chapter x of book ii. of the "Discorsi" (p. 213) Machiavelli speaks of the war between the Florentines and the Duke of Urbino in 1517, and remarks that, "*a few days ago* the Pope and Florentines together would have had no difficulty in defeating Francesco Maria, nephew of Pope Julius II., in the war of Urbino." In chapter xxiv. of the same book, p. 271, mention is made of Ottaviano Fregoso, who destroyed the fortress of Genoa, and who afterwards repulsed the attacks of the enemy. Now, as this event took place in 1521, it is plain that the author passed a much longer time in writing the "Discorsi."

longer on the "Discorsi," and after all left them unfinished; since, although designed as a commentary on the history of Titus Livy, they were not pursued beyond the first Decade. Yet even in their unfinished state they form a treatise on politics divided into three books. It may be asserted that if joined to the "Principe," they would form together a single and more complete work; the one treating of principalities, the other of Republics. The determination of certain critics to consider them as two distinct and unconnected works, written not only with different, but even with opposed intentions, has caused the strangest errors in judging them. But attentive perusal quickly leads to a different verdict. Not only does the one work frequently refer to the other,[1] but were the "Prince" lost, and nothing known of it save its subject, scope, and limits, it would be easy to reconstruct it almost entirely by giving greater develop-

[1] The second chapter of the "Prince" begins thus: "I will now cease from speaking of Republics, because elsewhere I spoke of them at length. I shall turn only to the *principato*," &c. ("Opere," vol iv. p. 2). The Discourses contain frequent quotations from the "Prince." In chapter i. of book ii. we find. "On this head it would be well to show the method observed by the Roman people in invading the territories of others, if we have not already spoken of it at length in our treatise on principalities, wherein this matter is diffusely discussed" ("Opere," vol. iii p. 183). In chapter xix. of book iii, after saying that the Prince should rather abstain from taking other men's goods than from taking their blood, he adds, "as has been largely treated in another treatise upon this matter" (Ibid, p 377). In chapter xlii. of book iii, after having said that princes do not keep their promises when the reasons leading to those promises no longer exist, he continues: "Whether this thing be laudable or not, or whether similar fashions should or should not be observed by a prince, has been extensively demonstrated by us in our treatise on the Prince, wherefore at present we will say nothing upon it" (p. 437).

From this it is evident that when Machiavelli was composing the "Prince," he had already spoken of Republics at length in the "Discourses." In fact, we find these quoted in the second page of the "Prince," whereas he first quotes the "Prince" at page 183 of the "Discourses"; that is, at the commencement of the second book. Signor Carlo Gioda, in his work, "Machiavelli e le sue Opere" (Florence, Barbéra, 1874), says, in mentioning the quotation from the "Discourses" to be found in the "Prince": "This sentence, according to Artaud, was changed at the time that the Medici gave permission for the book to be printed; yet it is not to be found in the copy of 1513, in the which year Machiavelli had not yet composed the 'Discorsi sopra la prima Deca di Tito Livio'; and he must have added it some years later, namely after having *fattened and repolished them*" (p 292). But where is this copy, dated 1513, from which the sentence is missing? This is not stated either by Artaud or by Gioda, and it is not known. (See Artaud, "Machiavelli, son genie," &c., vol. i p. 285, note 1.) Besides Artaud, to whom Gioda refers, is a writer of little weight and little exactitude Two apocryphal copies of the "Principe" that to ourselves and many others appear to be in Buonaccorsi's handwriting, are in existence; one in the Laurentian Library (cod 32, shelf xliv), the other in the Riccardi Library (cod. 2603) Both of these contain

Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella; and elsewhere by other potentates, who, while all unscrupulously trampling upon local and individual rights, founded, together with their own power, the power of the nations on which they bestowed unity and strength.

Now, although the novel conception of a national State was really born of causes, not wholly unrelated to those which had promoted the Reformation, and the effects of that conception were not contradictory to the Reformation, inasmuch as the former dislocated the universal unity of the Empire, and the latter the universal unity of the Church; yet the new political idea seemed to arise in opposition to the religious thought of the age. It had in fact appeared in the literature of the learned men in many different shapes; but, from the days of Petrarch, it had taken the form of a revival of a Pagan idea—the idea of ancient Rome restored to life and vigour in all the solemn majesty of her Republic or her Empire, and as a perpetual incitement to glory, political freedom, and above all to patriotism. Hence it came about that although the Reformation was re-awakening the spirit of Christianity in the world, it was barely mentioned by our politicians of the Renaissance. For these men seemed to be thoroughly imbued with the Pagan spirit, and merely regarded Christianity as a guide to private morality, an aid to individual salvation in the future life, but as having no concern in this life with the welfare of their country, which they rightly judged superior to every private interest.

And if the contemporaries of Machiavelli were Pagans in political matters, Machiavelli himself was a still greater Pagan, as is abundantly proved by every page of his works. It is proved by his boundless admiration for antiquity; his indifference to religion; his hatred towards the Papacy; by the way in which he spoke of Christianity, especially when comparing it with Paganism; and, finally, by the peculiar language he frequently employed and that demonstrated his mode of thought with singular lucidity. For example: he always used the word *virtue* in the sense of courage and energy both for good and evil. To Christian virtue in its more general meaning, he rather applied the term, goodness, and felt much less admiration for it than for the Pagan virtue that was always fruitful of glory. And in his opinion men valued glory beyond all else in the world, since that alone rendered them immortal and like unto the gods. Men, he said, preferred infamy to oblivion, for at least infamy served to transmit their names to posterity. He greatly admired, and often repeated with enthusiasm, the encomium of Gino Capponi upon "those who loved their country better than the safety of their souls," a phrase that was

downright egotism, without the moral guidance of any general interest, always entirely occupied amid the dissolution of all mediæval institutions with his own individuality, *il suo particolare*, would have thrown all things back into anarchy and ruin, had not his intellect, width of culture, and love of art and science saved him for a time, and with him society. But this state of things could not last long, unless some issue could be found. In fact it was thus that two great events of the world's history took place; namely, the Reformation of religion on the one hand; on the other the constitution of States and nationalities. These two events had no apparent connection with each other; but both in truth started from the idea that the individual man was naturally bad and powerless for good;[1] both were stimulated by the need of reconstituting the moral world, now threatened with ruin; and both sought success by means of recalling to life more general interests and more ideal aims. The Reformation initiated by Martin Luther in Germany, and exercising a salutary influence even upon Catholicism, by compelling it to amendment, regarded man as absolutely bad, and therefore, without superhuman assistance, capable only of evil. Man could only save his soul by faith infused into him by divine grace, but through no merit of his good works, which were instead the necessary consequences of faith and grace.

The other great event, that had begun earlier, and that occupied Machiavelli, who never concerned himself with religious questions, was the formation of the modern State, which brought about the reconstitution of social unity, by ensuring the victory of public good over private egotism. It seemed at that time as if by reason of human wickedness, this conception of social unity could never be effected, save by force. It was not thought possible to evolve it from the old institutions it destroyed; nor from the individual conscience tainted by selfishness; not even from the national conscience then existing only in embryo and that was to find its development in the new State. It seemed, therefore, to be the personal work of the sovereign or tyrant who, while solely aiming at the triumph of his personal interests, could only reach success by ensuring at least the partial triumph of the public welfare. This revolution, first begun in Italy, was completed in France by Louis XI. and his successors; was accomplished in

[1] Even Herr Karl Knies, in his paper, "Der Patriotismus Machiavelli's" (Preussische Jahrbücher, of June, 1871), after observing, that if Machiavelli thought ill of mankind, Martin Luther and the Reform began by having no faith in human goodness, concludes by saying, that we thus find the same conception of man, in politics as well as in religion.

well known that his culture was principally based upon Latin writers. But apart from questions such as these, and considering substantial points only, it is easy to perceive that the conception of the "State," occupying so important a place in Machiavelli's works, was evidently inspired by Roman history, and neither by Grecian history nor by Aristotle. For the Greeks, the State embraced all society, all individual activity; and the "Politics" of Aristotle—certainly one of the greatest monuments of human wisdom, and so lofty a one, that we must leap from it to Machiavelli to gain another step in advance—treats not only of governments, but of instruction, education, music, gymnastics, poetry, religion, the art of war, political economy, and every branch of human activity. According to Aristotle, the individual existed for the government; but the government must in all things improve the individual, and therefore compass him about on every side.[1]

On the other hand, the Romans, who echoed Grecian ideas in science, by defining the conception of justice, and distinguishing it from morality, still further strengthened the power of the State with respect to the individual; but at the same time they circumscribed its boundaries. Its force was augmented by becoming more strictly juridical and political[2] Now, whoever passes from Aristotle to Machiavelli is at once driven to recognize an enormous and substantial diversity in the fact that, for the latter, the political

had quoted Aristotle to him. "Neither do I know what Aristotle may have said of divided Republics; but I can form a good idea of what it might reasonably be, of what it is, and of what it has been" ("Opere," vol. viii. p 90). Notwithstanding the remarks of Ranke on the "Principe," Leo also allows that the comparison between Aristotle and Machiavelli "muss mit Bestimmtheit zurückgewiesen werden" See "Die Briefe des florentinischen Kanzlers und Geschichtschreibers Niccolò Machiavelli und seine Freunde, aus dem Italienischen übersetzt," von D. H. Leo Berlin, Dummler, 1826. Preface, page xx.

[1] It is enough to open the "Politics" of Aristotle to arrive at this conclusion. See the important work on this subject: "Die Staatslehre des Aristoteles in historisch-politischen Umrissen," von Prof. Wilhelm Onken, zwei Halfte. Leipzig, Engelmann, 1870 and 1875. Also a pamphlet by the same author entitled: "Aristoteles und seine Lehre vom Staat," Berlin, 1870

[2] These ideas, which may be called elementary, are expounded in the best known treatises. See "Théorie générale de l'Etât," par M. Bluntschli, translated by M. A. de Riedmatten, Paris, Guillemain, 1877. Book. i. chap. iii., "Histoire du développement de l'idée de l'Etât." The same author has also given a more detailed explanation of the difference, between the State of the Middle Ages, and the State of modern times, in his discourse. "Ueber den Unterschied der mittelalterlichen und der modernen Staatsidee. Ein wissenschaftlicher Vortrag gehalten zu Munchen am 5 Februar, 1855." München, 1855. See also, Theodore D. Woolsey, "Political Science or the State theoretically and practically considered" London, Sampson Low. Part ii chap. i., "Opinions on the Nature and Origin of the State."

highly popular at the period. This mode of feeling and expression, started by the learned men of the fifteenth century, among whom Machiavelli had been trained, became considerably softened in the sixteenth century, and we find it already somewhat modified in Guicciardini, who was always temperate and prudent. But in Machiavelli it survived in all its primitive vigour, still farther emphasized by its strange contrast with other ideas of his, which were much in advance of the fifteenth century and with his far more modern style of Italian composition. In fact, sentiments of that kind appeared much more tolerable in the Latin tongue employed by the learned men, who thus seemed in their writings to be held at a greater distance from the actual world in which they lived, whereas Machiavelli dedicated his whole thought to it, worked and wrote for that world alone.

Neither must we forget, if we would fully understand the more general tendencies and character of Machiavelli's mind, that, after holding for fifteen years the office of Secretary to the Florentine Republic, and serving it with the utmost zeal and fidelity, he always preserved his republican sentiments. In the very letters that he wrote to Vettori, to seek employment from the Pope or from the Medici in Florence, we have noted that even when obliged to make casual allusion to the Swiss, he neither could nor would restrain his enthusiasm for the warrior nation that enjoyed complete liberty together with purity and modesty of manners Therefore his first and supreme ideal was Republican Rome, than which his imagination could conceive nothing grander nor more glorious. In what fashion all these different ideas, tendencies and sentiments were co-ordinated in his works, and to what degree they became fused into a single code of doctrines, are the points that must next engage our attention

First, however, another serious preliminary question has to be examined. Some writers, and among them more than one of considerable weight, persisted in discovering in Machiavelli—and more especially in his "Prince"—an imitation of the "Politics" of Aristotle. All attempts, however, to prove the truth of this assertion only resulted in proving its baselessness, since all was reduced to laying stress on a few phrases of no scientific import, which Machiavelli may either have taken from Aristotle or from others. Certain expressions in his private letters lead us even to infer that at the time when he had nearly completed the "Prince," and written part of the "Discourses," he had never yet read the "Politics" of Aristotle.[1] Nor should this surprise us, since it is

[1] This was remarked by Herr Leo, in reference to the letter dated 26th of August, 1513, already quoted by us, in which Machiavelli replied to Vettori who

character of the experimental method *consists in this, that the* results of observation and induction are finally confirmed by verification with Nature. For Nature cannot withhold her verdict, and, as Aristotle himself said, can never speak falsely. And not only this: a phenomenon that has been studied and explained is very often reproduced by artificial means; and this was likewise unknown to the ancients.

Nothing of all this was possible in political science, which had, therefore, recourse to the historic method. But here, too, we find an immense difference between Aristotle and Machiavelli, who under this aspect was a true representative of the Renaissance. The problem proposed by Aristotle in his "Politics" was mainly an inquiry into the best form of government. He made an admirable analysis of all the governments of Greece, in order to glean from them the scattered constituents of the ideal he desired to reconstruct. A Republic or monarchy having real existence had no greater value for him than those living only in a philosopher's brain; and in fact he applied the same kind of criticism to the Republic of Plato as to the Republic of Sparta[1] The sole difference he recognized lay in their greater distance from, or nearer approach to his ideal. It was already a great step in advance to make use of history for the definition of this ideal; but Machiavelli had another object in view, and thus the governments imagined by philosophers were not of the slightest importance to him. Aristotle chiefly sought to establish that which men and governments should be; Machiavelli declared such inquiry to be useless, and rather tried to determine that which they were and that which they might actually be. For him, ancient and contemporary history were more than simple aids, they were the sole basis, almost indeed the essential substance of his science, which investigated the actual conditions of mankind and society, and aimed at the knowledge, not of that which should be done, but of that which was or might be done

There is one point, however, on which a comparison with Aristotle can be drawn without much deviation from truth. Originally the Grecian State was identical with religion, and hence its existence was sacred and divine. Aristotle was the first to study it rather as a natural fact, by declaring that man was essentially a political being. In this he was entirely at one with Machiavelli, and his work may be said to be analogous to that of the Italian Renaissance, which in its turn, by discarding the

[1] This has been well pointed out by Professor Oncken, who exactly on that account ought, we think, to have more explicitly recognized the stride made by political science during the Renaissance.

idea alone seems to have existence. Like the ancients, he sacrifices the individual to the State; but in his opinion the State is indifferent to every activity save the political and military, and is solely engaged in guarding the security of its own existence and increasing its own strength. Even in his Histories, Machiavelli's men appear incapable of any ambition or passion save the political; there is hardly any mention of letters, art, culture, or religion. Now all this is opposed to the vaster, more various, and more philosophic ideas of the culture of the Greeks. Yet notwithstanding its greater breadth, Grecian culture never succeeded in establishing the limits of law and government. Hence the heroes of Machiavelli must be sought on the Capitol, for his ideal country was always Rome.

Again, there is another aspect under which it has been attempted to collate him with Aristotle: both, it has been said, pursued the same method. And in the matter of method the genius of Aristotle was truly gigantic.[1] He was undoubtedly the real founder of the inductive method in natural science, and of the historic method in political science. According to him, natural phenomena were for the former that which were historical facts for the second. This discovery undoubtedly constituted one of the greatest events in the history of human thought, and forms one of the chief glories, not only of Aristotle, but of the enduring genius of the Greeks. But it is pure exaggeration to assert that all which appeared to be the special work of the Italian Renaissance had really been accomplished many centuries earlier by the Greeks.[2] Observation of nature and the inductive method were indeed originated by Aristotle; but this method revived and received a more general application during the Renaissance, and was transformed, or rather completed in Italy by Leonardo da Vinci and Galileo. The genuine experimental method, productive of the magnificent progress of natural science, is of modern growth, and is not restricted to the observation of nature, to the induction and deduction, forming its starting-point and basis, which were really known to the ancients. The new and genuine

[1] Robert von Mohl, in his excellent study, "Die Machiavelli Literatur," forming part of his great work, "Die Geschichte und Literatur der Staatswissenschaften" (Erlangen, Enke, 1855-58, in 3 vols.), after other remarks upon Machiavelli, goes on to say: "Zweitens uber ist seine Methode eine treffliche. Seit Aristoteles war er wieder der erste, welcher die inneren allgemeinen Grunde der von der Geschichte erzahlten, oder von ihm selbst erlebten und beobachteten Thatsachen aufzusuchen sich bemuhte und aus den einzelnen Erscheinungen auf die Ursache schloss. Diese ist allerdings noch nicht vollendete und am wenigsten systematische Wissenschaft, allein es ist die einzig richtige Grundlage fur eine Erfahrungslehre, wie diese die Staatskunst ist oder wenigstin sein soll" (vol. iii. p 539).

[2] On this head we do not altogether agree with Professor Oncken.

of the things of the world."[1] In the proem following this letter he adds that he well knows that he is exposing himself to much criticism, on account of the great novelty of his undertaking; nevertheless, stimulated by the desire he has always felt to render himself useful to others, he unhesitatingly enters "on a path as yet untrodden by other men."[2] What, then, is this path? "In all things we seek to imitate the ancients. Our juris-consults learn how to give advice by study of ancient laws, for in that consists jurisprudence; and medicine likewise is founded upon the experience of the ancients continued and enlarged by modern physicians. Yet in the ordering and maintaining of Republics, kingdoms and armies; in the art of aggrandizing empires and governing subjects, no one has recourse to the examples of antiquity. This comes of the lack of true knowledge of history, which all read for the simple pleasure of learning the various incidents it records; and instead of seeking to copy these, they believe all imitation impossible, just as though the sky, the sun, the elements and mankind were not always the same. Therefore these "Discourses" are written chiefly to show "the use that may be derived from history in politics."[3] Accordingly, it is clear from the very beginning that the object of the work is a new science of statesmanship based on the experience of human events and history.

Machiavelli quickly plunges into his subject, with the aid of Titus Livy, and after speaking of the various modes of founding cities, treats of the origins of governments and their various forms. "At first, men lived like brutes; then they thought of choosing a chief for their better protection, and elected the strongest man among them. Thus the first communities arose; the sentiments of justice and honesty came into being; the first laws were made, and punishments were inflicted upon transgressors. Afterwards they no longer chose the strongest, but the wisest and most prudent man to hold rule; this man then transmitted his power to his heirs, and thus arose monarchy, which was the primary form of government. But owing to the innate tendency of mankind to abuse all things, the monarch once assured of his power, he was sooner or later transformed into a tyrant. Thereupon, either in their own defence, or that of the people, whose leaders they became, the *ottimati*, or patricians, came to the front, and thus arose the aristocratic government, which, in its turn running to excess as soon as it was firmly established, was converted into the oligarchy. Finally the people rose, and founded the democratic government; and this also, and for the same reasons, proceeding to excess, sank

[1] "Opere," vol iii p. 1. [2] Ibid., vol iii p. 5
[3] Ibid., vol iii pp 6, 7.

shackles of theology, once more began to view history and society as purely human and natural facts. This revolution, however, had to combat difficulties unknown to the ancient world, in which the State had not found itself opposed by the mighty fabric of the universal Church; it had therefore to arrive at different conclusions, and being unable to reduce religion to a simple engine of government, as was the habit of Pagan antiquity, it was obliged instead to acknowledge its independence. Even leaving aside this, by no means unimportant difference, it is certain that the emancipation of human thought completed by the Italian Renaissance, although very similar to that promoted by the Greek philosophy, was achieved in Italy by the wholesale resuscitation of antiquity, and not by simple imitation of Aristotle. On the contrary, it had to start by combating his philosophy, which, misinterpreted during the Middle Ages, had been changed and distorted into a pliable weapon of theology. The *genuine* Aristotle, as it was called, came later, and the "Politics," brought from Constantinople to Italy by Francesco Filelfo in 1429, only began to be familiarly known towards the close of the century, by the printed edition issued in 1492 of the first intelligible and correct translation, already completed by Leonardo Bruni, of Arezzo. At that time the "Politics" found Italians prepared to appreciate its immense value, since they had for some time lived amid the same conditions coinciding with its production in Greece.

We now come to the "Discourses." These are divided into three books, of which the first treats of the methods by which States are founded and of their internal organization; the second of the methods of aggrandizing them and of conquests; while the third is devoted to the exposition of general reflections on the growth and decay of States, on the manner of effecting their transformation, on conspiracies, &c. The distribution of subjects in the different books is not always precise; on the contrary, it frequently occurs that one book treats of subjects proper to another. We will therefore examine the work as a whole, taking in logical sequence the arguments therein treated. For the present we will leave aside everything said—especially in the second book—regarding the art of war; that subject having been discussed by the author at greater length in a special treatise, of which we shall speak in due time.

The "Discourses" are dedicated to Zanobi Buondelmonti and Cosimo Rucellai, intimate friends of Machiavelli, and from whom, as we shall see, he received certain benefits. "I send you," he says, "the worthiest gift I have to offer, inasmuch as it comprises all that I have learnt from long experience and continuous study

We must, therefore, regard the whole of this chapter as one of the fragments of antiquity so frequently used by him in the construction of his political system. We do not further insist upon the point, because this law of history, we might almost say this attempt towards the philosophy of history, can only claim originality as regards Machiavelli's application of it, to which we shall have occasion to recur. For we have already seen that the idea of mixed governments had been transmitted to Italy from ancient times, and was considerably diffused there during the fifteenth century, precisely by means of Polybius.[1]

Machiavelli, then, after copying this passage, continues his considerations upon Rome. "Of a certainty, if the Romans had only aimed at the ensurance of internal tranquility they would have been able to found an aristocracy by the exclusion of the people. But then, beside the above-mentioned peril of falling into anarchy, their conquests would have been impossible, since to accomplish these it was necessary to arm the people, and an armed people cannot be excluded from a share in the government. Thus they necessarily arrived at mixed government, passing through periods of civil war."[2] In fact, no sooner were the Tarquins dead than the nobles began to void their venom on the people, and would have gone still further had they not been checked by violent tumults and new laws, since men do nothing good except of necessity. It is therefore said that hunger and poverty render men industrious, and that laws make them good. Where, in fact, things work well of themselves, there is no need of laws, which, however, become necessary where good practices are lacking.[3]

At the same time the natural wickedness of men renders necessary, but difficult—and for that reason all the worthier of glory—the mission of the legislator, of him who undertakes to found a State, the which institution has been invented for the benefit of mankind. This is the work of the political genius, of the wise ordainer and giver of laws, whose object must be not his own, but the general welfare, and who therefore removes

document xviii. Professor Triantafillis, in his pamphlet, "Niccolò Machiavelli and the Greek Writers," Venice, 1875, p. 9 and fol., gives the original passage from Polybius, the Italian translation by Dr. J. Kohen, and the fragment of Machiavelli, in order again to prove its identity with the Greek original.

[1] On this point it is suitable to quote the work of a young writer: "Del Governo Popolare in Firenze (1494-95), secondo il Guicciardini," by Dr. Amedeo Crivellucci. Pisa, Nistri, 1877, p. 102 and fol. It contains some accurate observations regarding the manner in which the idea of mixed government was diffused among us at that time.

[2] "Discorsi," bk. i. ch. vi.

[3] Ibid., bk. i. ch. iii.

into demagogy. This in its turn made princely power a necessity, and human society again trod the same road from the beginning, with infinite twists and deviations, unless, as frequently happened, it was checked half-way by falling a prey to neighbouring States. To avoid the dangers caused by these continual changes and revolutions, prudent men invented the mixed form of government—composed of all the three other forms—judging it to be safer and more stable, because sovereign, patricians and popular government being united in the same city, all kept one another in check. This it is that was accomplished with excellent results by Lycurgus at Sparta. Romulus, on the other hand, founded a monarchy; but that which in Rome was left undone by the legislator, was brought about by good fortune and the natural force of events The insolence of kings gave rise to government by consuls and patricians, the insolence of the latter roused the people, who, without overthrowing either consuls or patricians, gained its share of rule. And thus a mixed government was naturally formed, in which the monarchical element was represented by consuls, while the aristocratic and popular elements also shared in it at the same time."[1]

This theory of the sequence of governments and their alternation reminds us of that afterwards expounded by Vico, and might lead to many considerations, if one alone did not prevail over all others.[2] The fragment we have epitomized above, is no more, with the exception of some novel observations on the history of Rome, than an imitation, and even more frequently the translation of a well-known portion of the sixth book of the "Histories" of Polybius. We have elsewhere noted our reasons for believing that Machiavelli knew this work through some Latin version; but it is beyond all doubt that in his "Discourses" he copied it outright[3]

[1] "Discorsi," book i. chap. ii.

[2] The resemblance we find between the succession of governments as it is defined in the "Scienza Nuova" of Vico and the "Discorsi" of Machiavelli, need cause us no astonishment, since both theories were derived from the history of Rome, and were both perhaps suggested by ancient writers. Besides, even by modern writers the theory is partially admitted. Sir Henry Maine, in his excellent work on "Ancient Law" (London, Murray, 1878; ch. i. pp. 10, 11), tells us that: "The proposition that a historical era of aristocracies succeeded a historical era of heroic kings may be considered as true, if not of all mankind, at all events, of all branches of the Indo-European family of nations." And shortly before, in speaking of the patricians who succeeded to kings: "Unless they were prematurely overthrown by the popular party, they all ultimately approached very closely to what we should now understand by a political aristocracy."

[3] Vol. ii note to p 14 of this work. *Vide* Italian edition, Appendix (II.),

"Prince." On the contrary, it is very plain, even from the opening chapters of the "Discourses," that Machiavelli not only justifies, but commends Romulus for having murdered his brother and permitted the murder of his chosen partner; and that he likewise praises Cleomenes for having seized the first opportunity of compassing the death of the Ephors. Indeed, he would have blamed both the one and the other had they failed to commit these acts In the "Discourses," too, he loudly and unmistakably upholds the other doctrine, so often combated as peculiar to the "Prince," namely, that of the end justifying the means Wise men, he says, will forgive Romulus his worst actions on account of the end he had in view and the result he achieved.

And once for all we must also observe that Machiavelli accepted Roman history as he found it in Livy, without any criticism of his own, and without any fresh examination of the facts therein related. Indeed, he accepted indiscriminatingly both actual historical facts and fabulous traditions regarding the origin of Rome. On party struggles and on the causes of certain political reforms he frequently makes profoundly original remarks. But it is no less true that he often founds his theories upon incidents which never occurred, or only took place in some very different fashion, and this remark may be applied both to Roman and Grecian history.[1] Nevertheless, this does not really impair the special value of his theories, because these in general, and particularly those of the greatest importance, are seldom based on a single fact; and, indeed, being explained and repeated over and over again, they are verified by numerous groups of different facts drawn both from ancient and modern history. Occasionally even we find Machiavelli quoting the fables of mythology—as, for instance, that of the training of Achilles by Chiron the centaur—in support of an assertion; for by fables, he says, we are taught that which their inventors really wished to signify.

[1] Although all that we have asserted upon this head needs no corroboration, being thoroughly self-evident, yet we may quote the words of a very trustworthy historian Herr Schwegler ("Romische Geschichte," vol. i. ch. ii. § 29) tells us, in speaking of the "Discourses," "Die Schrift ist reich an den feinster und treffendsten Wahrnehmungen im Gebiete der politischen Psycologie . . .; uber die allgemeinen psycologischen Gesetze des Staatsund Volkerlebens werden dann hochst kluge und geistreiche Urtheile vorgetragen. Was dagegan dem Verfasser fehlt ist ein richtiger Begriff, eine objectiv-historische Anschauung des romischen Alterthums besitzt er nichts, daher sind seine Urtheile, z. B. diejenigen uber Julius Cæsar gar oft unhistorisch und durch conventionelles Vorurtheil dictirt" Naturally this defect is visibly diminished wherever Titus Livy is an authentic source of history; but is much increased wherever it is a question of vague traditions.

without scruple or mercy every obstacle he finds in his way. "Many will deem it a most pernicious example, that one who, like Romulus, was the founder of a civil community, should first have killed his own brother and then consented to the death of Titus Tatius Sabinus, his chosen companion." "The which opinion would be true if we did not consider the reasons urging him to those crimes." "And it should be adopted as a general rule, that in order to found and reconstitute a State it is necessary to be single-handed; all must be the work and creation of one regulating mind, for without this no true unity can ever be attained, nor anything stable founded. Therefore a prudent ruler desiring to be of service, not to himself and his successors, but to his country and the general welfare, must endeavour to hold sole authority; nor will he ever be censured by wise men for taking extraordinary measures in order to constitute a kingdom or found a Republic." It may well be that even "when his deeds accuse him, he shall be justified by their results; and when it is a good deed, like that of Romulus, the deed itself is sufficient justification, since he who commits violence for purposes of destruction does verily deserve censure, but not he who commits violence in order to establish security." "When, however, the State is once founded it should be entrusted to the care and guardianship of many, to ensure its duration; inasmuch as although one man only is needed for its foundation, the interests and wills of many joined together are required for its preservation. And thus did Romulus, who, in confiding the State to the care of the Senate, proved by his deeds that he had not been incited by any greed for power. If, however, he had not been alone in the beginning, it would have happened with him as with Ægidus, who, wishing to rule the Spartans once more in accordance with the laws of Lycurgus, was killed by the Ephors. Greater acumen had Cleomenes, who, comprehending the necessity of standing alone and taking advantage of the first opportunity, had all the Ephors put to death, after which he was able to re-establish all the laws of Lycurgus, and would have succeeded in maintaining them, but for the power of the Macedonians and the weakness of the other Republics of Greece."[1]

We cannot pause just now to weigh the intrinsic value of these doctrines, but there are several points demanding consideration. First of all, let the reader remark how mistaken is the opinion of those who maintain that the exposition and defence of certain maxims opposed to all humanity and to every principle of Christian morality are only to be found in the

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. ch. ix.

that the peoples nearest to Rome are those having least faith in it. And whoever considers the use made of religion by the Church of Rome and the nature of its manners, must deem its hour of flagellation and destruction to be near at hand. But inasmuch as there are some who believe that the welfare of Italy depends from the Church of Rome, I will allege two very weighty reasons against her." "The first, that by the infamous example of that Court, this land has lost all devotion and all religion. . . . We Italians, then, are first indebted to the Church and the clergy for the loss of our faith and the gain of wickedness; but we likewise owe them another and greater obligation, which is the cause of our ruin. It is that the Church has kept and keeps our country divided And verily no country was ever united or happy, save under the complete sway of a Republic or a sovereign, as has been the case with France and Spain." "The Church alone has prevented this union in Italy; for having had her seat there and held the temporal power, she has neither been strong enough to occupy it entirely, nor so weak as not to be able, when fearing the loss of the temporal power, to summon a new potentate to defend her against any one threatening to seize it. Thus the Church has been the true cause, for which Italy has never been united under one head, but always divided among many lords and princes, wherefore the land has fallen into such feebleness that it has become the prey of the first who attacked it. For all this we Italians are indebted to the Church and to none else. And if any man should desire to see of what the Church may be capable, let him introduce her among the Swiss, the only nation still living after the fashion of the ancients, and he would see that in a brief space the iniquitous customs of that Court would create more disorder than any other event that could possibly occur." [1]

It has been already recognized by all that here, for the first time, the necessity for the unity of Italy was clearly perceived, and the tremendous obstacles always opposed to it by the Church and the temporal power, noted with marvellous depth of observation. Machiavelli's acrimony against the papacy was very great, not only for the reasons herein alleged, but for others also. Chiefly occupied with the idea of constituting the unity of the State, as the supreme aim of the policy and civilization of his time, he was relentless in his desire for the removal or destruction of everything opposed to that aim. He had, therefore, a supreme contempt for all the mediæval institutions shattering or impeding that unity, especially when they still retained sufficient strength for resistance.

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. ch. xii. pp. 54–56.

And certainly if there be truth in fables, there is no less truth in primitive traditions.

However that may be, the theory first founded by him upon the life of Romulus, regarding whom we have so little authentic knowledge, seemed to Machiavelli of the widest general importance. He therefore frequently recurred to it in his pages, and sought to corroborate it both by the weight of ancient tradition and of historical facts of the utmost diversity. Not only, too, should the founders of kingdoms and republics stand alone, but, for the same reasons, the founders of religious creeds, equally intended to curb the evil passions of mankind and enforce righteous laws, should likewise act singly. "The Roman people was greatly favoured by fortune in obtaining after a law-giving, warrior king like Romulus, a sovereign like Numa, founder of a religion, the which is always necessary for the maintenance of civilization, more especially among a people so ferocious as the Romans of that time. And to gain increased authority, he feigned to hold intercourse with a nymph, a means to which Romulus was not constrained to have recourse, but which has been turned to account by other law-givers, and more especially by makers of creeds, the better to win the belief of the people. The religion of the Romans was one of the chief sources of their greatness, inasmuch as it caused the laws to be respected and morality preserved. The sagacious politician will always respect religion, even if he have no belief in it, since there have been frequent proofs that through inculcating it even by craft, much valour has been roused for the defence of the country.[1] In fact, when the Consul Papirius wished to give battle to the Samnites, he called the augurs to ascertain the auspices; and the chief of the Pollarii, seeing that the army was ready for battle, said that the fowls had pecked, although that was not true, as was afterwards discovered. Nevertheless, the Consul gave battle, saying, that were there any deception, it would be punished by the gods, and meanwhile he caused the Pollarii to be placed in the van of the army. Thus when their chief was wounded and killed, he instantly exclaimed that all was going well, since chastisement had come. And the Romans, either in good faith or by calculation, always enforced respect for religion, and found their profit therein.[2]

"Had the Christian religion been maintained as it was instituted by its founder, things would have gone differently, and men would have been greatly happier. How much, on the contrary, it has been changed and corrupted, is proved by this,

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. ch. xi. and xii. [2] Ibid, bk. i. ch. xiv.

rather from the cowardice of those who have interpreted religion, than from religion itself, since this really enjoins the defence of the country, and should therefore render men capable of defending it."[1] Machiavelli's defect, however, was seldom that of tempering and softening his own judgments. On the contrary, he was accustomed to go straight to his aim; and therefore, even when confronted by the hostile forces of political expediency and of private and Christian morality, he never hesitated, never said, like Guicciardini, that these were things only to be discussed in a whisper among friends, to avoid giving scandal. Instead, he wrote words such as these: "Where it is an absolute question of the welfare of our country, we must admit of no considerations of justice or injustice, of mercy or cruelty, of praise or ignominy; but putting all else aside, must adopt whatever course will save its existence and preserve its liberty."[2]

To suppose that Machiavelli was adverse to virtue and freedom, or even indifferent to them, would be, as we have already observed, a very grave mistake. On the contrary, no one has sounded their praise with greater fervour; but he gives the highest place to public virtue, the only virtue engaging his continual attention, and to which he subordinates and, on occasion, sacrifices every private virtue. Over and over again he tells us that the first praise is due to the founders of religions, the next to founders of monarchies and republics, the next, again, to military leaders, and lastly, to literary men, also—differing in this from all other scholars, but more faithful to antiquity—he always ranks action above thought and speech. "On the other hand," he continues, "infamous and detestable are the destroyers of religions, of monarchies, of republics; the enemies of virtue, of letters, and of all that is useful to mankind Nor can there be any one, who, when pushed to choose between the two species of men, will not commend the first and censure the second. Yet, in practice, many prefer to be tyrants, rather than lawgivers and founders of republics or monarchies, being deluded by false appearances and by foolish greed for power Otherwise they would understand that an

[1] "Discorsi," bk. ii. chap. ii. pp. 188, 189. In Mr Lecky's excellent "History of European Morals" (2 vols.: London, Longmans, 1869), there are certain pages that seem almost copied from Machiavelli. The fundamental conception frequently expounded by Mr. Lecky on this subject is certainly identical with that of the "Discorsi." "A candid examination will show that the Christian civilizations have been as inferior to the Pagan ones in civil and intellectual virtues, as they have been superior to them in the virtues of humanity and chastity. We have already seen that one remarkable feature of the intellectual movement that preceded Christianity, was the gradual decadence of patriotism," &c. (vol. ii. p. 148).

[2] Ibid, bk. iii. chap. xli.

For instance, he never desisted from censuring the free companies, and this, not only because in his opinion they had corrupted the art of war by preventing the formation of national armies, but also because they almost constituted, as it were, an independent power within and opposed to the State. He wished to extirpate feudalism, which made impossible the equality that in his ideas, and according to Florentine tradition, was necessary to the Republic, and which, under a Monarchy, was an impediment to the unity of the regal power. Touching the associations of arts and trades dividing and subdividing society during the Middle Ages, he was as silent as though they had never existed, solely because, in his own day, their former vigour had fled. But naturally he had an intense aversion for the Church, which, in her own territories, and together with the temporal power, constituted a State that he deemed monstrous, because of its opposition to every principle of good government. Even outside her special dominions, the Church, with the aid of her religious authority, scattered disorder and confusion everywhere, preventing throughout Italy and obstructing throughout Europe the formation of any nationality.

Added to this there was also that which we have styled the Pagan spirit of Machiavelli, rendering him a grudging admirer, if not an adversary, of the Christian religion, at least in all things bearing on its social and political action. In fact, when he reflected how in ancient times there had been so large a number of free nations, and so much greater liberty than in his day, he believed that he had discovered the cause in the diversity between the Pagan and the Christian religions. "The latter makes us hold of small account the love of this world, and therefore renders us more gentle. The ancients, on the contrary, found their highest delight in this world, and were more ferocious in their actions and in their sacrifices. The religion of the ancients beatified none but men crowned with worldly glory, such as leaders of armies, or founders of Republics; whereas our religion has rather glorified meek and contemplative men, than men of action. It has placed the supreme good in humility and poorness of spirit, and in contempt for worldly things; whereas the other placed it in greatness of mind, in bodily strength, and in all that gives men daring. Our religion bids them to be strong in endurance rather than in deeds of strength. Thus the world has fallen a prey to the wicked, who have found men readier, for the sake of going to Paradise, to submit to blows than to resent them. But, and here he almost tries to mitigate his too explicit judgments, "if the world has grown thus effeminate and heaven disarmed, it comes

frequently used as a starting-point for his researches. In his opinion men were always essentially the same, and the same accidents were perpetually renewed. Indeed, this was the very reason why it was possible to find in the past, by examination of history, precepts and guidance for the regulation of the present and the future.[1] This is what Machiavelli tells us in the "Discourses," and also reiterates in the "Prince," in his comedies, poems,[2] and every one of his writings. How, then, are we to explain the continuous variety of human vicissitudes and of human society? Do we not see, as he himself observes, that men always praise the past more than the present; and does not this, perhaps, prove that they perceive a difference between the one and the other? Truly, he replies, we often praise the past because it arouses no envy, and because we find it exalted by the great writers of antiquity. "It is certain, however, that human affairs are continually in movement, and always either rising or declining; wherefore, he who lives while they are in the declining stage, has good reason to laud the past. I believe that the world has always been the same, and always contained as much good as evil, although variously distributed according to the times. Virtue passed from Assyria into Media, went thence to Rome,[3] and after the fall of the Empire, no longer remained concentrated in a single country, but was diffused through several: among the Franks, among the Turks, at this day in Germany, and previously in the Saracen tribe that did so many great deeds, and destroyed the Roman Empire in the East. Hence it follows, that he who is born in Greece or Italy, must praise the past and blame the present times, in which there is nothing to compensate for their extreme misery, infamy, and shame; where there is no observance of religion, of law, or of military discipline. The thing is clearer than sunlight; wherefore I will plainly declare the conclusion that I derive from it, so that the mind of youth may flee these times and prepare to copy the ancients, since it is the office of an honest man to teach to others that good which, through the malignity of times and fortune, he has not been able to carry into effect."[3] And in this way he explains the immutability of human nature, the continual repetition of history, and the continual mutation of human events.

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i chap. xxxix. See also bk. iii chap. xliii.
[2] Prologue of "Clizia"; "Asino d'oro," chap. v.
[3] Although he afterwards mentions Greece, it should, however, be noted that he does not here name her. For him antiquity was very frequently restricted to Rome and the Empire of Constantinople.
[4] "Discorsi," Proem to bk. ii.

Agesilaus and a Timoleon had no less power than a Dionysius and a Phalaris, but rather, were greater and more honoured. Nor should any man let himself be deluded by the glory of Cæsar, on finding him extolled by writers who did not dare to blame him.[1] Let him rather read how they sing the praises of Brutus. Let him call to mind the times of Titus, Nerva, and Trajan, and compare them with the reigns of bad emperors. On the one hand, he will behold citizens enjoying security, magistrates exercising authority; peace, justice, and virtue exalted; all rancour, licence, and corruption extinguished; he will behold golden times in which every man could hold and maintain whatever opinions he chose. If, on the other hand, he considers the times of the rule of bad emperors, he will see them to be full of cruelty, discord, and sedition." "He will behold Rome in flames, the Capitol demolished by the hands of the citizens, the ancient temples in ruins, all ceremonies debased, cities full of adultery; he will behold the sea covered with exiles, the shores stained with blood. In Rome he will behold cruelties innumerable, and nobility, riches, honour, and, above all, virtue regarded as capital sins. And doubtless, if he be of human birth, he will shrink from any imitation of evil times, and will be inflamed by an immense desire to follow those which were good. And truly, if a prince be in search of worldly glory, he should desire to hold rule over a corrupt city, not to entirely despoil it like Cæsar, but to reorganize it like Romulus"[2] Romulus, who did well to murder his brother Remus, and to allow the murder of his companion Titus Tatius Sabinus!

At this point Machiavelli, in pursuing his own road, found himself compelled to enter on a new order of ideas So far, he says, he has always reasoned on the supposition that men are not utterly corrupt. When, however, corruption becomes general—as, for example, in Italy at his own day—there are far greater difficulties to be overcome, it being requisite to examine the infinitely various conditions in which peoples and states may happen to be, and the different rules to be observed for their guidance and government under existing circumstances. But to hinder the solution of this problem there was one theory to which Machiavelli constantly clung, that he continually repeated, and

[1] German writers have frequently blamed Machiavelli for this judgment of Cæsar, repeatedly pronounced by him. That in these days a very different verdict has been passed upon the character and conduct of Julius Cæsar, especially since all that has been written concerning him by Theodore Mommsen, is beyond all doubt. We must not, however, forget what was the general opinion of him in past times, down to the end of the last century, and almost to our own day.

[2] "Discorsi," bk. i. chap. x. pp. 46–48.

ployed by him when he has to govern a universally corrupt people, and when it is a question of making some substantial change in the form of government, whether by passing from tyranny to liberty or *vice versâ*. The means to be employed in such cases must of necessity be violent "A people accustomed to live under tyranny, can with great difficulty be trained to live in freedom, inasmuch as it is like a wild and ferocious animal, always fed behind bars; and the new free government will have all the patricians of tyranny arrayed against it." "There is, then, no more potent, nor more valid, nor healthier remedy than to murder the sons of Brutus."[1] And for the like reasons "a Prince who would seize the government in his own hands, must build upon the people, without whose favour he will not be able to stand. But with regard to the ambitious who crave for power, he must at once either content them or crush them, even as Clearchus, tyrant of Heraclea, who, when placed between the fury of the people and that of the patricians hated by the people, murdered the latter and thus satisfied the former.[2] And as a general rule, whoever usurps tyranny without killing Brutus, and whoever founds a free State without killing the sons of Brutus, holds power but for a brief term, as was the case with Piero Soderini, who fell through having tried to vanquish the sons of Brutus by kindness[3] But even when the sons of Brutus have been put to death, a people accustomed to live in servitude cannot by this means at once obtain freedom, unless some man arises to keep them free by force, the which freedom can only last during his life When the material is incorrupt, riots do no harm; when corrupt, good laws are useless, unless some man arise to compel their observance by extreme violence and long enough for men to become good; and I know not if this has ever occurred, or if it be possible that it should occur."[4]

"To treat of these almost improbable cases may," says Machiavelli, "appear superfluous; yet as it is necessary to reason on all things, I will presuppose a most corrupt city, thus increasing all similar difficulties, inasmuch as there can be found neither laws nor institutions adequate to curb a universal corruption. In fact, even as virtuous customs require laws for their maintenance, so these need the former for their observance. And although laws may be changed with facility, it is not the same with political institutions, and much less with the manners and social structure of a people. Liberty," continues Machiavelli, "always implies

[1] "Discorsi." bk i ch xvi p 65.
[2] Ibid, bk. i. ch xvi p 66.
[3] Ibid, bk iii. ch iii.
[4] Ibid, bk i. ch xvii.

Accordingly, the first consequence to which this leads is the necessity of adapting our means and talents to our own times, in order to avoid rushing on certain ruin. "No sooner did Manlius Capitolinus allow himself to be seduced by ambition, than, notwithstanding his many good deeds in the service of his country, every man's hand was against him, and he was doomed to overthrow; for he had failed to discern that the time was ripe for liberty, manners being pure and the Republic firmly constituted. And therefore Titus Livius says: *Hunc exitum habuit vir, nisi in libera civitate natus esset, memorabilis.* He certainly would have been not only a fortunate, but a rare and memorable man, had he been born in a corrupt city, as for instance in Rome during the days of Marius and Sulla; and these latter, on the other hand, would have been speedily destroyed had they lived in his time. Hence it is needful to know how to adapt yourself to the different conditions of time and place, for no one man can have the power to change the nature of a people.[1] Since, however, neither can he have the ability to change his own nature, so it follows that fortune has very great influence over human events, causing you to be born in times adapted or adverse to your qualities. Fabius Maximus, by nature a temporizer, was fortunate in holding command when the Romans were exhausted, and hence incapable of daring and rapid resolves. On the other hand, he was wrong to offer opposition, when Scipio afterwards wished to go to Africa, for then the times had changed, but not his character; so that had it depended upon him, Hannibal would be still in Italy. But such is the nature of men that when they have reached their ends by a certain road, they cannot understand that, the times having changed, success may be won by other methods, and that the old ways are no longer of use. Certainly, did they know how to adapt themselves to and change with the times, they might always be able to succeed in their enterprises; but being too ignorant or reluctant to do this, it follows that fortune has a tremendous power over human events.[2] And against this mysterious force rebellion is vain, for all history clearly proves that men may second fortune, but cannot oppose her; may weave her webs, but cannot break them Only they should never abandon themselves to despair, since being ignorant to what end fortune may lead, and knowing her to move by tortuous and untraced paths, they should always retain hope, no matter in what straits they may be."[3]

These ideas finally lead Machiavelli to inquire what should be the conduct of the statesman, and what means should be em-

[1] "Discorsi," bk. iii. ch. viii. [2] Ibid., bk iii ch ix.
[3] Ibid, bk ii ch xxix p 288

banished or suppressed; and equality, which is the essential basis of liberty, has thus been preserved."

"Of these nobles," Machiavelli continues, "Naples, Rome, Romagna, and Lombardy are full; whence it comes that those lands have never had any true Republic, nor any political existence; for such races of men are entirely hostile to all civilization, and any man who should undertake to establish order among them could only succeed by first erecting a monarchy, since nothing save the weight of a royal hand and absolute and excessive power could hold in check the excessive ambition and corruption of the nobility. In Tuscany, on the contrary, there are the Republics of Florence, Sienna, and Lucca, and it is apparent that the other cities, even if they have it not, are all desirous of liberty. And all this is because there are no feudal chieftains in those parts, but so much equality, that any sagacious man with some knowledge of the ancient civilizations could easily introduce free institutions among them: but the ill luck of those provinces has been so great, that down to these days no one has arisen able or willing to effect this."[1]

We might, on the other hand, cite the example of Venice, where nobles alone hold office; but they are nobles only in name, since their riches consist of merchandise, and they neither have great estates, nor castles, nor judicial authority over other men. Thus we are always brought to the conclusion that liberty can only be founded on civic equality, and that feudalism is absolutely contrary to every really free and republican institution. Wherever it exists, it is either necessary to establish a monarchy, or to positively put a bloody end to feudalism and extirpate it, before establishing a republic At that time, too, each of the different provinces of Italy was in a different condition, some being only adapted for the formation of a monarchy, others for that of a republic. And as, without the union of all Italy, it was impossible to convert it into a powerful State, accordingly its condition was almost desperate, it being equally difficult to found either a united republic or a monarchy.

He who would reorganize a city by means of a republic or a free kingdom, must, according to Machiavelli, preserve at least a shadow of its former institutions, so that there may be no apparent change.[2] He, on the contrary, who would found an absolute monarchy, must alter everything: have a new government, new institutions, new men; must enrich the poor; build new cities; destroy old ones, so that all may be recognized as proceeding from the prince. It is requisite to follow the example

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. chap lv.

[2] Ibid, bk i chap xxv.

equality, and sovereignty, inequality. How, for instance, could liberty be established in Milan or Naples, where there is no sort of equality among the citizens; or who might hope to easily change by law a similar state of things? To effect a gradual alteration in all this would demand a wise man, able to discern things from a great distance; but such men are always few, and hardly ever find favour with the multitude. Then, in order to make a sudden reform, it would be necessary to have recourse to arms; and first of all to make yourself lord of the city in order to dispose of it afterwards according to your will." "And inasmuch as it needs a good man to reorganize the political life of a city, and a bad man to become by violence lord of a Republic, it is therefore very rarely found that a good man will desire to acquire rule by bad means, even for a good end; or that a bad one, having acquired rule, will act justly, or think of using for good the authority that he has won by evil. From all these above-mentioned things comes the difficulty, or rather impossibility, of maintaining a Republic in corrupt cities, or of creating one afresh. And even were it possible to create or maintain it in like places, it would be necessary to compose it rather as a monarchical than a popular State; so that those men who by reason of their insolence cannot be corrected by the laws, may be in some measure restrained by an almost regal authority."[1]

Passing from these general considerations to an examination of the actual condition of Italy, "it will clearly be seen that in Italy, by reason of her corruption, there is little or nothing to hope, save by the daring and violence of some great man, who may be able and willing to strive for her improvement. In Italy all is corrupt, as in part Spain and France are also corrupt; but in the two latter nations things go much better, as they are already established kingdoms. In Germany, on the other hand, there are well-governed Republics and uncorrupted manners which cause things to go well." And hereupon Machiavelli is roused to give us anew an ideal description of the armed Republics of Germany and Switzerland, where freedom is great and manners golden. "The which goodness," he says, "is all the more admirable in these times, because of its rarity; indeed it has only survived in those countries because they have had little commerce with their neighbours, and thus retained simplicity of life, and forbidden the introduction amongst them of the customs of France, Spain, and Italy, the which nations taken together are the bane of the whole world. In the German Republics there is still the very great advantage of the nobles having been either

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. ch. xviii pp. 74, 75.

by means of parties, only succeeded in creating division among themselves.[1]

Yet notwithstanding past and present experience, the men of our time always prefer half measures. Of this we have had a recent and notable example, when Julius II., alone and without an army, entered Perugia to drive out Giovan Paolo Baglioni. Sagacious men could not then understand why the latter did not seize Pope, Cardinals, and all their rich belongings. "It could neither be goodness nor conscience that restrained him, since no pious respect could have a place in the bosom of a guilt-stained man who had seduced his own sister, and murdered his cousins and nephews in order to reign; but they arrived at the conclusion that men do not know how to be honourably bad, or perfectly good; and as a completely wicked act has some greatness or some element of generosity, so they cannot perform it. Thus Giovanpagolo, who had not shrunk from incest and public parricide, could not, or rather dared not, even on a just occasion, accomplish an enterprise for which every one would have admired his courage, and which would have procured him eternal remembrance as the first man to show prelates of how little account are those who live and rule after their fashion, and who would thereby have done a deed whose greatness would have surpassed every infamy, and every danger that might have ensued from it"[2]

Nevertheless, observes Machiavelli, force, courage and violence do not always suffice, especially for rising from mean fortunes to great "Frequently fraud and stratagem are also required; indeed, fraud alone may sometimes suffice, but never force alone. Zenophon, in his life of Cyrus, teaches us the necessity of deceit; since the latter's first expedition against the King of Armenia was full of fraud, and succeeded by stratagem, not violence And the observance of this method is necessary, not only to princes, but likewise to republics, at least until their power be consolidated, as is proved by the example of the Romans."[3] Elsewhere, too, he tries to explain that he does not intend the unconditional praise of fraud. "Although of its nature fraud is always detestable, yet its use may sometimes be necessary, and even, as in warfare, for instance, glorious. In fact, he who overcomes his enemies by fraud is no less extolled than he that overcomes them by force. Of which we may read so many examples, that I need not quote any." "I will only say this, that I discern no glory in fraud that makes you break your pledged word and settled terms, for such fraud, even if it may sometimes win you states and

[1] "Discorsi," bk iii. chap xxvii. p 397. [2] Ibid., bk. i. ch. xxvii.
[3] Ibid, bk ii. ch xiii.

of Philip of Macedon, of whom it is told, "that he transferred human beings from province to province, even as herdsmen drive cattle. These are most cruel measures and inimical, not only to all Christian, but all human existence; and every man should avoid them and prefer to live the life of a private individual, rather than be a sovereign at the price of so much destruction of mankind." "But he who will not follow the way of righteousness, must for his own safety enter on the way of evil, and ever eschew those middle courses, which, without rendering him virtuous, are neither profitable to him nor to others."[1]

Machiavelli was a very persistent opponent of all the half measures which, as he said, hampered the men of his time, and kept them perpetually hesitating between the precepts of Christian morality and political expediency, without thoroughly obeying either the one or the other. "The Romans avoided such measures, deeming them most pernicious; since government consists in nothing more than in restraining subjects in such wise that they may not harm you, and hence you should either benefit them so as to win their liking, or curb them so that it may be impossible for them to work you harm."[2] And therefore there are three methods of ruling a subject and divided city: by murdering the party leaders, by removing them, or by winning them to peace. The last is the most dangerous method, the first the most secure. But inasmuch as similar deeds are of their nature grand and generous, a feeble republic cannot perform them, and is so incapable of them, that it can barely be led to adopt the second remedy. It is into such errors that the princes of our day always fall, owing to the weakness of this generation, caused by their slender education, and their scanty knowledge of history, which makes them deem ancient methods as partly inhuman and partly impossible. They have certain modern notions of their own far removed from truth, like that judgment of the wise men of our city who said: that it was advisable to hold Pistoia by means of factions, and Pisa by fortresses. They failed to perceive that fortresses were useless, and government by means of factions always a danger. In fact, when a prince governs by such means, he has always one party against him; this party will seek aid from without, and thus at the first occasion he will have foes both within and without the walls. If, too, the government be a republic, it can find no better means of dividing itself; as happened to the Florentines, who, by seeking to reunite Pistoia

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. chap. xxvi.
[2] Ibid., bk. ii. chap xxiii.

sudden; it is far better to carry out the original design even at some inconvenience or hazard. Then courage sometimes fails at the moment of action, either from reverence for the prince or from cowardice. Hence it is always necessary to choose tried men, "because without experience no one can know what courage he may have in great emergencies."[1] "Also, it may be that sudden and unexpected dangers supervene; but concerning these we can only reason by precedent, to induce men to greater caution, and nothing else. Of all dangers, however, that for which conspirators can find no remedy is when the people is well affectioned to the prince." And so this chapter goes on to the end examining and drawing distinctions with a truly remarkable lucidity, penetration and knowledge of human nature

But we must not forget that the chief argument of the work, the central point of all Machiavelli's theories, is ever the foundation of the State, the stable and enduring formation of its organic unity by the efforts of the legislator, no less in the event of this legislator desiring or being compelled to found a monarchy, than in that of his having instead the good fortune or magnanimity to be founder of a republic, and acting in such wise that, after his death, his government may remain standing in the charge of the people, which is always better able to maintain than to establish it. And here the question arises, in what way Machiavelli proposed to constitute this unity, and especially republican unity, when, in his day, the liberty of republics was restricted to the dominant city, by which all others were kept in subjection? We have seen that Guicciardini had already noted, although merely stating the fact without drawing any other conclusion from it, that it was really better to become subject to a monarchy than to a republic; because the former treated all its subjects alike, while the second sought to limit the benefits of liberty solely to its citizens proper. Machiavelli made the same observation, when he wrote that the heaviest servitude is that imposed under a republic, inasmuch as it is more lasting, and because the aim of the republic is to enervate and weaken all others in order to increase its own stability; and no prince will attempt this unless he be some barbarous destroyer of countries, and devastator of all human civilization, similar to the princes of the East. For if he have some humanity and rectitude, he will bear equal affection towards every city beneath his sway."[2]

However, Machiavelli does not content himself, like Guicciardini, with noting down the fact and then passing on to other subjects. He again affirms that the method pursued by the

[1] "Discorsi," bk. iii ch. vi. p. 331. [2] Ibid., bk. ii. ch. ii. p. 191.

kingdoms, as we have treated of above, will never win you glory. But I speak of the fraud that is directed against the enemy who does not trust you, and which really consists in your management of the war."[1]

From all that we have thus far noted, it is very clear that Machiavelli pronounces no judgment on the moral value of individual deeds, but on their practical effect as political actions. This, indeed, is always the predominant characteristic of his political writings, and we see another most lucid example of it in his lengthy chapter upon conspiracies.[2]

Here he has quite the aspect of a physiologist making experiments in vivisection, and using his anatomical knife to dissect the different organs and ascertain their functions. Conspiracies are hatched against those rulers who are most generally hated. Then, private injuries to life, honour and property usually give animus to revenge. As to injury to life, the threatening of it is far more dangerous than its actual performance, since dead men cannot think of vengeance, and their survivors often leave the care of it to the dead. Far more dangerous then are injuries to property and honour, for the prince can never so entirely despoil a man that he have not a dagger left him with which to wreak vengeance; nor dishonour a man so thoroughly as to deprive him of an obstinate impulse to revenge."[3] Plots are also woven from the sole desire of freeing the country; but in such case princes have no resource save that of renouncing their tyranny, and as they will not do this, they often therefore come to a bad end.

Besides, conspirators incur danger by their deeds, both before and after. First of all they are betrayed by spies, by surmises, or their own imprudence. The sole remedy in this case is to instantly communicate the matter to your comrades, to compromise them, and then act as quickly as possible. Sometimes this haste is imposed by the necessity you find yourself in of doing unto the prince that which he is about to do unto you. Thus it drives men forward in a way that brings them success, and therefore princes should beware of uttering threats, which in such cases are most dangerous. Peril on the actual outbreak of a conspiracy comes from either changing the plan already established, or from failure of courage, or from errors of imprudence, or from leaving part of the enterprise incomplete when it is a question of putting many persons to death. Once the mind is fixed on a settled mode of action, it is most perilous to change it all of a

[1] "Discorsi," bk. iii. ch. xl. [2] Ibid., bk. iii. ch. vi. "Delle congiure."
[3] Ibid., bk. iii. p. 316.

jection and oppression of the subjects is a system that proved injurious even to armed republics like Sparta and Athens, and will always be ruinous to unarmed republics like ours. The truest and best method then is that pursued by the Romans, of creating comrades and not subjects, and it was the more praiseworthy in them, inasmuch as they were the first to adopt it; they had had no predecessors on that road, nor was their example afterwards imitated by others. In fact, although to this day we have the example of the Swiss and the Suabian leagues, Roman institutions have never been copied by any one; on the contrary, no one considers them of much account, in part because they are deemed false, in part impossible, in part unfitting and useless So it comes about, that thanks to this ignorance of ours, we are the prey of every one that chooses to assail this land. And should there seem to be any difficulty in the imitation of the Romans, none such need be found in that of the ancient Tuscans, especially by the Tuscans of these times; for although the former, on account of the reasons we have quoted, could not found an empire like that of Rome, they acquired in Italy all the power that can be acquired by a government of leagues." [1]

We must call to mind all the principal political writers of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries in Italy, all the then most universally and unreservedly accepted ideas, in order to understand the immense effort Machiavelli must have made in order to free himself from them and attain to a lucid conception of the unity of the State. It is true that he does not arrive at any scientific definition of it, does not go so far as to proclaim that all subjects should be citizens and equal before the law, and that all, either directly or indirectly, should share in the government of the State. But for this we have to wait until the eighteenth century and the French revolution. Machiavelli, as we have seen, puts aside and repudiates feudalism, mercenary troops, the political power of the guilds of arts and trades, the temporal dominion of the Popes and their interference in the State, of which he desires the unity, strength and independence. And he was also the first to see that this organic unity could not be established until subjects were treated as equals and not as inferiors. And to these ideas, which constitute a genuine event in the history of political science, he continually recurs with varying clearness, but with unvarying faith and constancy. "France has frequently taken possession of Genoa, has held it by force, and has always lost it. Now at last, constrained by necessity, she allows it local government, with a Genoese at its head, and holds it in a far firmer grasp. Men are

[1] "Discorsi," bk. ii. chap. iv.

mediæval republics was extremely bad, perilous and destructive. "Republics," he says, "have three modes of aggrandizing their States: First, by confederation among themselves on the Etruscan or Swiss plan; secondly, by placing the conquered on the same footing with themselves, although in such wise as to retain the supreme command, the seat of empire and the glory of their common enterprises, which was the plan pursued by the Romans; thirdly, by creating subjects and not associates, as did the Spartans and the Athenians. This third method is of all the worst, since to undertake to hold and govern cities by violence, especially those which have been used to freedom, is a difficult and wearisome matter. To carry it out with success it is necessary to be very strongly armed, and to enlarge cities by adding many strangers to the population. Sparta and Athens failed to do this, and therefore were destroyed. It was instead done by the Romans, who at the same time also followed the second method, and grew powerful. First of all they made the peoples of Italy their colleagues, binding all to themselves by common laws, but invariably retaining rule and empire in their own grasp. Afterwards, with the aid of these colleagues, they subjugated foreign peoples, who, having been under the dominion of monarchs, were not accustomed to liberty. And therefore, when the Italians tried to rebel, the Romans were already very strong and could reduce them to submission, having first known how to increase their own cities by means of foreigners, inasmuch as they understood the need of imitating nature, and that no slender stem can ever sustain a stalwart tree. Then, as regards the first method, that of a confederation, it was that which was observed by the Etruscans, who by means of the union of twelve cities, governed by a league, were very mighty both in warfare and commerce, and held in respect from the Tiber to the Alps.

"Such confederations do not acquire extensive dominions, but keep all that they gain, and are not exposed to hostile attack. It is plain to see why they do not attain to great power. A republic that is divided and has several centres cannot carry on its deliberations with ease and readiness; it has no craving for dominion that must be shared among many. It is also demonstrated by facts, that these confederations never exceed the twelve Republics of the Etruscans, or the fourteen of the Swiss, and thus have almost settled limits[1] In cases where there is neither the desire nor possibility of following this method, aggrandizement by the sub-

[1] It is plain that he had now read what Aristotle had written on "divided republics," of which Vettori had spoken to him, and that his exaggerated belief in the future power of the Swiss was somewhat diminished.

the Gauls, *contra jus gentium*, were left unpunished and created Tribunes. Then, when the catastrophe came and the danger had been felt, they were punished, and religion and law once more enforced. In Rome the Tribunes, the Censors and all the laws against the ambitious were intended to continually recall the Republic to its primitive principles. Sometimes the simple virtue of a great man is sufficient to lead a people back to liberty and purity of manners, although institutions are always more efficacius. Possibly the Christian religion would have been entirely extinguished by its corruption, had not St. Francis and St. Dominic, founders of new orders, restored it to its original principles." "Likewise, kingdoms need renovation and the re-establishment of their laws on the old basis. And we may discern the good effect of this in the kingdom of France, the which kingdom is more submissive to the laws and to order than any other. The which laws and order are maintained by Parliaments, particularly by that of Paris, which renews them whenever it issues a decree against a prince of that kingdom, and whenever it condemns the king by its verdicts. And up to this time it has maintained itself by its persistence in upholding justice against the French nobles; but should it ever allow one of these to go unpunished, or permit them to multiply, it would doubtless happen, either that they would have to be corrected with much violence, or that the kingdom would be dissolved."[1] Now we may question whether Machiavelli's idea was always expressed with much clearness, and we may find some difficulty in defining it with precision, but we cannot say that he sought remedies for endangered institutions beyond the bounds of those institutions. Recurrence to their first principles here signifies a return to the fundamental conception of him who had created them; since, as we are aware, in Machiavelli's eyes, laws, religions, and governments were the achievement and personal creation of the legislator, this being always the sole way in which he conceived and understood their organic unity. To firmly maintain the legislator's fundamental conception, and to return to it whenever there had been any deviation, was therefore the only means of keeping institutions alive and ensuring their natural development.

This development is the work of the people, to whom the legislator must entrust the defence and welfare of the country. As, however, the people may stray from the right path, so it is necessary to forecast the way to lead them back, which will always be easier than to lead back a prince, inasmuch as peoples are always better than princes "These latter," continues Machiavelli,

[1] "Discorsi," bk. iii. chap. i p. 306

all the readier to throw themselves into your arms, the less you appear disposed to compel them, and the more you show yourself humane and familiar with them, the less they dread you as regards their liberty."[1] He then quotes the example of how Capua spontaneously requested the Romans to give them a Prætor, and continues: "But what need to recur to Capua or Rome, when we find examples in Tuscany? Pistoia gave herself to the Florentines of her own will; Lucca, Pisa and Sienna were always hostile. And that was not because the Pistoiese had less love of liberty than the others, or held themselves of less account; but because the Florentines had always treated them as brothers, while treating the others as foes." "And there is no doubt that had the Florentines, either by means of treaties or acts of kindness, tamed their neighbours instead of driving them wild,[2] they would at this moment be lords of all Tuscany. By this I do not mean to say that we should never have recourse to arms and violence, but only that such methods should be reserved to the last, when all others shall have failed"[3]

And if in the sixteenth century it was impossible for Machiavelli to arrive at a full, precise, and scientific definition of the true organic unity of the State, that is, to this day, so much disputed a theme, neither, and for the same reasons, could he succeed in exactly determining its historic and natural development. Yet he had an intuitive sense even of this, and frequently recurred to it, although somewhat vaguely. At the beginning of the third book he pauses to say, that for governments and institutions to have long life, they must be organized in such a way as to be often able to recur to their fundamental principles. This maxim has been praised by many, without being fully understood. On the other hand, Capponi considers it erroneous, and charges Machiavelli with keeping his eyes turned behind him, and seeking the remedy of things outside their limits, *i.e.*, "in their vanished elements."[4] But all who carefully study this chapter will perceive that Machiavelli did not seek help and strength for institutions from without. His wish was to draw them continually back, not to their past, but to the principles according to which and on which they were based; and the examples he frequently adduces throw additional light upon his idea. "Before the seizure of Rome by the Gauls its institutions were not respected, and the three Fabii who fought

[1] "Discorsi," bk. ii. chap. xxi p. 257.

[2] In the original text Machiavelli writes *i suoi vicini* (his neighbours) instead of *i loro vicini* (their neighbours). As is well known, Machiavelli frequently makes grammatical blunders of this kind.

[3] "Discorsi," bk. ii. chap. xxi p. 258

[4] "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," vol. ii. bk vi. chap vii. p 366.

army their greatness of soul exalted them above all princes; they cared neither for monarchs nor republics; nothing ever terrified or alarmed them, and on their return to private life, they became frugal, humble, careful of their slender means, obedient to the magistrates, reverent towards their superiors; so that it might well seem impossible that one and the same mind could withstand so many changes"[1] "And such were always the results of free institutions and popular governments; results which are never obtained by a monarchy, and especially not by an absolute monarchy, although this is the only useful kind, and positively needful, whenever it is a question of reuniting a nation, or founding a State, after the fashion of Romulus, Lycurgus, and Solon. If, however, such principality should last long, and not leave the care of government to the people, or at least if the prince do not share it with the people, as the kings of France share it with Parliament, then the evil is instantly felt. It is true that the Dictatorship was an absolute power and yet did no harm to the Roman Republic; but it was likewise a legal and temporary power, neither usurped nor perpetual, which is that which works evil.[2] Although legal, the power of the decemviri was very hurtful to Rome, for then the consuls and tribunes were suppressed and the people almost abdicated its authority. Unlimited and unrestrained power is always hurtful; for even when the people is not already corrupted, it speedily becomes so[3] In fact, it was seen how rapidly the power of Appius Claudius was increased by the favour of the people, and had he made use of this favour to extinguish the patricians in order then to dominate the people, he might at once have established a tyranny. Instead, he joined with the patricians against the people, thus incurring its enmity and bringing about his own fall, since he who commits violence should be more powerful than those on whom violence is committed; wherefore, in order to establish a tyranny with only the aid of a few within the walls, it is at least necessary to make provision for assistance from without."[4]

With this we may bring our examination of the "Discorsi" to a close, merely remarking that many chapters of the second book, and a few of the third, are devoted to the art of war held by Machiavelli to be so essential a part of the art of government. However, as he has written a special work upon war, containing a fuller development of the same ideas, it will be better to explain those ideas in their proper place At present, it is enough to call attention to the two most remarkable points. These are: the

[1] "Discorsi," bk. iii chap xxv. pp 393, 394.

[2] Ibid., bk. i. chap. xxxv.

[3] Ibid, bk. i. chap. xxxv.

[4] Ibid, bk. i. chap. xl.

"are more ungrateful than peoples, whose ingratitude is ever less injurious, being born of error, and not of ambition or corruption of mind, as is generally the case with princes. Also the people is much wiser. And although the contrary opinion is prevalent, being even maintained by Titus Livy, I will venture to assert against all, that the people is more constant, more judicious, more prudent than any prince." "And it is not without reason that the voice of a people is compared to the voice of a god; for we see that a universal opinion produces marvellous effects by its prognostications, so that it would seem to have an occult gift of foreseeing its evil and its good." It is capable of accepting the truth it hears, and is superior to the prince in the election of magistrates. Nor will a people ever be persuaded that it is good to raise any infamous person, or one of corrupt life to high estate, whereas a prince may be easily and in a thousand ways persuaded to do so. And truly we may by speech win over a licentious people; but with a bad prince steel is the only remedy. And it has ever been seen that, "those cities wherein the people is lord, make the greatest increase in the shortest time, and far greater than any increase that has ever happened under a prince. And although princes are superior to peoples in ordaining laws, forming civil institutions, organizing statutes and new institutions, peoples are so superior in the maintenance of organized things, that they undoubtedly add to the glory of those who first organized them."[1] And it is no marvel that free cities should make greater conquests and have greater prosperity, "because it is not the good of the individual, but the good of the community that constitutes the greatness of cities. And it is beyond doubt that only in republics is the common welfare considered. When there is a prince it happens on the contrary, that which is good for him is hurtful to the city, and that which is good for the city is hurtful to him. So that where tyranny has taken the place of free institutions, the least evil that can happen to that city is that it should make no farther progress"[2]

And whenever Machiavelli enters upon this train of thought, his enthusiasm continually re-awakens, and he always lauds to the skies the old republican times which were his constant ideal "Quintius Cincinnatus, when proclaimed consul, was found labouring with his own hands on his little farm, and Marcus Regulus, while in the command of armies in Africa, begged for leave of absence in order to attend to a country house, that had been damaged by his workmen. Thus these citizens made war for the sake of glory alone." "When placed at the head of an

[1] "Discorsi," bk i chap lviii. [2] Ibid, bk ii chap. ii.

instead of building them up"[1] In conclusion, then, according to Machiavelli, some strongholds might be useful at the frontiers; but in general it was necessary to trust only in the love of subjects or in armed forces, after the example of Sparta and Rome The petty tyrannies established in Italian cities by *coups de main*, and maintained by the aid of a few adherents, or of a fortress, in which the prince was often obliged to take shelter, were henceforth doomed to total disappearance.

[1] "Discorsi," book ii chap. xxiv.



enormous contempt and almost hatred felt by Machiavelli for the free companies and free captains which he considered the scourge and ruin of Italy; and his almost boundless belief in the efficacy of a national militia, on the model of that of the Romans. With respect to all these things he was in advance of his time; and by recurring as usual to Roman examples, became a prophet of the future. But, on the other hand, he showed very little faith in fire-arms, and not much more in fortresses. The latter, he says, are of scant use, if intended for defence against external enemies, and they are positively hurtful, if intended to serve against your own subjects. A prince needs strongholds only when he is hated for his bad government; they then give him courage to persevere in evil, whereas they become altogether useless to him when the indignant people revolts in earnest, or the enemy knocks at the gates, especially now that there is ordnance—to which Machiavelli at this point rather inconsistently attributes an importance that elsewhere he seems to altogether deny it. "A prince must either establish himself on the love of his subjects, or must keep a powerful army and try to trample down the people, but must never place his reliance in fortresses. The fortress of Milan, erected by Francesco Sforza, did not preserve his heirs either from internal or external enemies. Guidobaldo, Duke of Urbino, on his restoration to his States, from which he had been expelled by Cæsar Borgia, made wary by experience, pulled down the fortresses, which had proved useless for his defence, and only serviceable to his enemy, and placed his sole reliance on the affection of his own subjects. Still more worthy of note is the example lately furnished us by Genoa Every one knows how, in 1507, this city rebelled against Louis XII. of France, and that the formidable stronghold he then built there proved of no service in 1512, when the French being driven from Italy, the town rose in revolt. Then Ottaviano Fregoso, after starving out the garrison, had the sagacity to demolish the citadel, and established his power, not upon stone walls, but upon the love of the people and his own merits and prudence. By these means he holds the city to this day; and whereas formerly a thousand foot-soldiers sufficed to upset the Genoese State, now his adversaries have brought ten thousand to the attack, and nevertheless failed to do him any hurt. Brescia was taken notwithstanding its fortress; the Florentines who built the castle of Pisa, found that it only served the purpose of the Pisans, and did not understand that they ought to have followed the example of the Romans, *i.e.*, by giving the city equality with themselves, or else destroying it. The Romans in all territories they wished to hold by force, knocked walls down

society as a simple aggregate of individuals, whose passions had to be held in equilibrium. He sought and desired the social unity of the State; he studied the passions of the people, aristocracy, and princes, and recognized that these were not purely individual or personal passions. Nevertheless, the final object of his researches and science was ever the exhibition of precepts regarding the political conduct to be observed by Statesmen. It is only when we find him advising actions we deem to be dishonest, and sometimes positively iniquitous, that our conscience irresistibly reacts and rebels, so that we are almost led to deny the very admiration which the writer had previously aroused in us. It is no explanation to say that he preached such precepts, because both he and his own times, which he simply describes, were equally bad. How was it that Guicciardini, a no better man than he, did not arrive at the same conclusions? How was it that Giannotti and the many other politicians and historians of those days never offered immoral counsels? Would not the mere fact of raising a description of corrupt times to the rank of precepts and permanent instructions to statesmen be an error so grave as to withdraw all solidity and stability from the very basis of a general system of political doctrines? Machiavellism is no capricious and accidental fact in the history of human thought. For its due comprehension and judgment, we must investigate, without forgetting the personal and psychological causes determining its physiognomy, the logical and historical causes which led to its appearance.

We have seen what was Machiavelli's starting-point. To reorganize a corrupt city, to found a nation or a State, requires a legislator like Romulus, Solon, or Lycurgus. These, when their work was complete, confided its development and defence to the people, thus rendering it a beneficial and lasting achievement. But its inauguration was and, according to Machiavelli, must always be the deed of one alone, who to wisdom and grandeur of soul also unites strength and absolute power. This conception had arisen in his mind, because in his search for and study of social unity in the pages of history, it had struck him in a very different light from that in which it had been contemplated in the Middle Ages, and equally different from the light in which it is contemplated by ourselves. To our eyes society appears to be a living organism, having birth, growth, and development, almost as the natural product, the inevitable consequence of a nation's character and history; as, to a great extent, the result of an impersonal labour, that the legislator has only to co-ordinate and determine.



CHAPTER III.

Criticism on the "Discourses"—The "Reflections" of Guicciardini upon the "Discourses."



THE exposition we have given of the "Discourses" in the preceding chapter, if without furnishing a reply, may have recalled to the reader the usual question: whether Machiavelli's aims were good or evil? Was he honest or dishonest? Thus we are once more brought face to face with the sphinx, whose enigma no one can explain. And it is a problem that will always remain unsolved so long as it is presented to us in the same way. The narrative of Machiavelli's life can acquaint us with the character of the man; but the examination of his works must first of all teach us the worth of his doctrines. And this is no psychological nor personal question, but a general question and one of political science. It does not hinge on the inquiry whether Machiavelli sought good or evil; but rather whether he succeeded in discovering and expounding truth. His character serves to explain to us rather the form than the substance of his doctrines, of which the source must be looked for less in the nature of the man, than in the mind of the thinker. That he trod a new road is recognized by all. That his reflections upon history, upon the rise and decline of States, on the connection of events, on the sequence of parties in Rome and in Florence are most admirable, no one puts in doubt. So, too, all acknowledge his method to be excellent, his eloquence very great, his political psychology far superior to that of his contemporaries, not excepting Guicciardini; for Machiavelli was not satisfied, like all the rest, with regarding

in whose image he was made, above and beyond society, with the power of manipulating it according to his own pleasure, there is no longer any moral standard by which we can estimate his actions. These acquired an independent, impersonal value, and were neither honest nor dishonest in the true sense of the word; but useful or harmful, praiseworthy or blameworthy, accordingly as they did or did not attain the proposed end; accordingly as that end was, or was not, to the advantage, not of a few individuals, but of society at large. Did one or more men prove a hindrance to the power of the legislator, and the reorganization of the State, the legislator was not to hesitate to rid himself of them in the way he thought best, even, when necessary, by force, fraud, or betrayal. Did he shrink from the performance of similar inhuman and cruel actions, it was better for him to retire into private life, where alone it was possible to abstain from them. Indeed, the first condition to be fulfilled by Machiavelli's pattern legislator was precisely that of entirely divesting himself of his private personality, and of disregarding the charge of unscrupulousness, so long as he kept in view his one great purpose, the good of his country; before which all other considerations, not only of private interest, but of honesty or dishonesty, were bound to give way. And then, "even though facts accuse him, it must needs be that results will justify him." To Machiavelli it seemed idle to inquire whether a political action was moral or immoral according to the standard established for private deeds, for his world of politics was ruled by substantially different laws.

Nevertheless, his reflections produce a very singular effect on the mind of the modern reader. We continually pass from the deepest disgust, and even horror, to the sincerest admiration, without being able altogether to account for these perpetual alternations of almost openly contradictory feelings. It might be said that instead of comprehending the sphinx by force of gazing upon it, we end by becoming a sphinx-like enigma to ourselves.[1] While revolted by the immorality of Machiavelli's precepts, we are filled with admiration and almost fascinated by the truth of

[1] Macaulay remarks, in his eloquent Essay upon Machiavelli: "The whole man seems to be an enigma, a grotesque assemblage of incongruous qualities, selfishness and generosity, cruelty and benevolence, craft and simplicity, abject villany and romantic heroism. . . . An act of dexterous perfidy and an act of patriotic self-devotion call forth the same kind and the same degree of respectful admiration. The moral sensibility of the writer seems at once to be morbidly obtuse and morbidly acute. Two characters altogether dissimilar are united in him. They are not merely joined, but interwoven" (Macaulay's "Essays," Leipzig, 1850, vol. i. p. 63). We shall speak later on of this Essay's merits and defects.

Machiavelli, on the contrary, regarded it as the work and creation of the Statesman, of the political genius, who was not the representative of the popular conscience, but rather gave the people whatever impress, form, and almost conscience he chose. That which we now style impersonal, unconscious labour, is an idea of essentially modern birth, that was altogether unknown to the Renaissance and to Machiavelli. He was well aware that the work of the people was joined to that of the legislator, and precisely for that reason he asserted that the one continued, preserved, and completed the work of the other. The power to initiate and create institutions always rested with the legislator. Therefore the power conferred upon him by Machiavelli in the "Discourses," the "Prince," and the "Histories," seems almost unbounded. At one moment he makes the legislator drive populations from place to place, as herds are driven; at another he makes him change a republic into a monarchy, or *vice versâ*. Elsewhere he states "that it is truer than any other truth, that if a prince has subjects and not soldiers, he should rather blame himself than the nature and cowardice of mankind.[1] And princes are ever the guilty cause of the sin and corruption of peoples. In our days we have seen Romagna flooded with blood and vengeance by the deeds of covetous princes, who made laws and then urged their violation, in order to enrich themselves by the fines they imposed And only on their destruction, by the hand of Cæsar Borgia, was order re-established in that land."[2]

We have already observed elsewhere that according to Machiavelli, the people in the hands of its legislator was as soft clay in the hands of the sculptor. Its moulding in the shape of a republic or a monarchy, of a democracy or an aristocracy, was not effected, according to the varying circumstances, by some historical necessity, that no one could nor might oppose; it depended on the courage and will of the Statesman, who was certain of success if he knew his art and went straight to his end, without ever straying into side paths. Sometimes it would almost appear as though the personal deity of the theological schools of the Middle Ages had come down to earth incarnated in the shape of Machiavelli's no less omnipotent legislator. If he did not, as was said of Bossuet's God, guide all the peoples of the earth, as a charioteer guides his fiery steeds, he shaped, almost created his people, and led it in whatever direction he chose. Placed in a thoroughly exceptional position, even as the God

[1] "Discorsi," bk. i. chap. xxi. p 79, and bk. iii. chap. xxxviii. p. 430.

[2] Ibid., bk. iii. chap. xxix. entitled: "Che gli peccati dei popoli nascono dai principi."

succeeded by their means in initiating the unity and greatness of France? Was not Ferdinand the Catholic a master of deceit, and yet had he not, together with Queen Isabella, founded the new monarchy of Spain? Was not England, was not all Europe overflowing with treason and bloodshed?[1] And if he looked back to the Middle Ages, did he not find still greater barbarity, ferocity, and iniquity of all kinds? Did not Rome and Greece furnish examples of most cruel and violent men in those illustrious founders of States, whom tradition and legend had exalted almost to heaven, and to a level with the gods? Did not ancient writers accord the highest praise to the most atrocious crimes, whenever these were advantageous to the national greatness? Of what avail then, concluded Machiavelli, to imagine ideal governments which have never been and can never be? Of what use to recommend a course of policy that is followed by none, nor has ever been followed, and that would prove the ruin of him who should follow it?

To all this, however, we may reply by the inquiry, whether a mind like his was not bound to discern the diversity of the times and of mankind? It was clear that Christians could not observe a pagan morality in public life, any more than they observed it in private. The Middle Ages were a period of barbarism, and the Renaissance one of transition and transformation. Could he not perceive that better and more normal times might and must follow when it would not only be possible, but requisite, to pursue the more honest and more moral political conduct, which should be the aim of science and the only conduct accepted by it as a rule? But on this head he found an insurmountable obstacle in another of the fundamental theories already laid down by him in the "Discourses," and from which, in his day, it was impossible to diverge. In all his works, not only political and historical, but likewise literary, Machiavelli reiterates a thousand times, both in prose and verse, that men are always the same, that their nature knows no change, and that the same accidents are perpetually repeated in the world. Indeed, were this not the case, no science of government would, he thinks, be practicable, since it would then be impossible to base any rule for the present and future on the experience of the past. Laws, institutions, and governments

[1] These points have all been treated with much truth and learning, by Professor Andrea Zambelli in the fine reflections on the "Principe," republished in his volume entitled, "Machiavelli, Il Principe," &c. Florence, Le Monnier, 1857. But, as we shall see, this author is one who refers everything to the influence of the times. He appears to think that, in order to justify Machiavelli and Italy, it is enough to prove that the rest of Europe was equally corrupt and followed a no less immoral policy.

his judgments. The legislator, the "Principe," whom we so often detest, seems the spontaneous and natural product of the realities by which Machiavelli was surrounded; for, in fact, it is very plain that although this type was partly derived from antiquity and from his own imagination, it was also a faithful portraiture from life. Accordingly the writer's marvellous realism seems to cast a flash of light on the events of history, revealing new truths, which in their turn, however, become still more involved in mystery the more violently they clash against our conscience, whenever they are transformed into precepts and claim authority over us in the name of reason.

Machiavelli beheld the Italian Republics which had lapsed into anarchy, rapidly and inevitably converted into despotic governments. But no sooner any party leader of superior audacity, intelligence, or ambition stepped forward to seize the reins of government, weapons were instantly employed against him. Hence he was either compelled to withdraw, or prevented from observing any rule of morality, save the only one possible in a state of anarchy and warfare. He had to oppose dagger to dagger, poison to poison; to deceive and betray; to be at the same time wily as the fox and brave as the lion; to treat men as tools, to be cast aside when no longer needed. Once master of the State, all things depended on his will, and he had to provide for everything, unless he wished to lose everything. In conditions such as these any attempt to act with loyalty, honesty, or humanity, would at once cause the ruler to be overwhelmed by bloodshed or ridicule, and ensure his ruin, without profit to others. But when the Prince succeeded, although by violence and fraud, in grasping power, establishing government, bestowing security and justice on the citizens, then all joined in sounding his praises. And had Machiavelli then asked himself what and where were the men who succeeded in ruling according to humanity and Christian goodness, certainly it would not have been easy, nor even possible to find them. What was the history of the Visconti, of Ezzelino da Romano, of the Sforza, or the Aragonese? If he turned his glance towards the heads of the Christian religion, he beheld the iniquitous arts of governments practised by men like Sixtus IV., Innocent VIII., and Alexander VI.

Undoubtedly it might be objected that all this resulted from the decadence and moral corruption of Italy, and that it would therefore be better to seek elsewhere for a model of good government. But on looking beyond the Alps, Machiavelli only found new and stronger confirmation of his theories. Did not all know the cruel tricks and stratagems of Louis XI., who, nevertheless,

prehending the profound difference between primitive man and the man of their own day. Even for the philosophers of the eighteenth century human nature was immutable, and they had not the faintest idea of historic evolution. How can we otherwise account for their false theory of a state of nature? They believed that if man were emancipated from the bonds of society and restored to a forest life, he would find himself in a sort of earthly paradise, in a primitive state of innocence and goodness, and exempt from all social corruption; just as though society were not the only natural state for man, and as though outside of it, he did not lapse into brutal savagery; just as though morality and civilization were not the results of society and history!

What was it that the philosophers of the French Revolution hoped to effect? Destruction of the remains of the past, destruction of the present, for the purpose of fabricating a new society, with a new government, founded on the unchanging principles of reason. They failed to perceive that the total destruction of the past and present would likewise entail the destruction of the future, which cannot exist without the past, and would throw society back into barbarism. On this point they were even less modern than Machiavelli, who at least had no faith in these philosophical modes of government, and gave no credence to the empty dream of finding an ideal man beyond the limits of society.

The idea of the historic evolution of man and society, of which the first gleam is seen in the "Scienza Nuova" of G. B. Vico, and which remained at that time the solitary thought of a single philosopher, only forced its way into science and the general culture of the world, after the philosophic revolution initiated by Kant. As Bryce justly remarks in his work on "The Holy Roman Empire": "There is nothing more modern than the critical spirit which dwells upon the difference between the minds of men in one age and in another; which endeavours to make each age its own interpreter, and judge what it did or produced by a relative standard."[1] And this remark, although applied by the author to the Middle Ages, may with equal force be applied to the Renaissance.

It has been proved with sufficient clearness that the conception of an absolute and permanent equality among men, together with the conception of a natural state, was first formulated in the *jus gentium* of the Romans and in their right of nature, according to which *omnes homines natura æquales sunt.* Little by little this conception made its way into political science; but its progress was

[1] Bryce, "The Holy Roman Empire." London, Macmillan, 1866, ch. xv. p. 287.

change, virtue and vice are differently distributed in different lands, whence the continuous variety of incidents; but mankind remains ever the same. And for this reason, when acquainted with wise laws and good institutions, especially such as those of the Romans, we may safely re-model States after the virtuous pattern of the ancients.

At the present day it is very difficult for us to form an accurate conception of this mode of viewing things, or to measure its entire consequences, since we have long passed into a totally different order of ideas. According to our conceptions, man continually changes, and laws, institutions, governments, and manners change with him, inasmuch as they are the result of his activity, and product of his brain. Thus, were there no change in man, there would be no alteration in society. But as all proceeds from man, so man is responsible for all; wherefore, he who obeys two different laws of conduct in public and private life, must answer for both to his conscience and reconcile it with both. Accordingly, for us everything is co-ordinated and organically constituted in society, which, like man, is subject to the law of historic evolution, has a personality and responsibility of its own, and becomes more moral, as individual morality progresses, since it cannot be admitted that the one should be the negation or entirely independent of the other. Certainly this forms no hindrance to our belief in the ever immutable principles of morality, nor in the fixed laws and unity of human nature. But this unity is not immoveable, is indeed, to use Hegel's expression, in continual course of *becoming*, is organic and living, and history is its life. Even, nay specially, for us moderns, study of the past is indispensable to knowledge of the present; not, however, because these are identical, but rather because the present contains the elements of the past from which it is derived. Thus psychology, politics, jurisprudence, social science found in history their secure and indispensable basis; they were no longer, *à priori*, abstract sciences with unalterable phenomena, but experimental and concrete sciences with ever-changing phenomena, the laws of whose changes have to be discovered.

But we cannot be surprised that Machiavelli had none of these ideas, when we remember that even in the eighteenth century they had not yet penetrated into science. Why, in fact, did writers then explain the origin of society by the social contract; the origin of languages by a species of stipulated agreement among men; the origin of mythologies by the artificial inventions of philosophers, who for popular use clothed abstract truths in concrete shapes? Solely because they had not yet succeeded in com-

principles, only varying in their application. Unable to demolish Christian morality, which asserted itself as absolute, immutable, eternal, and was in substantial agreement even with ancient philosophy, he was forced either to renounce the real study of facts, or to consider the world of politics as entirely independent and apart from the world of private and Christian morality, and regulated by entirely different laws.

What, in fact, was the end attained by the political writers of the Middle Ages, the end of which they would never lose sight? Their lengthy dissertations on the goodness, virtue, and piety of the ruling classes were read with avidity by men who nevertheless continued to rend each other to pieces, under the influence of the most ferocious passions.[1] It was a science that, having taken no account of reality, never exercised the slightest influence over it. And certainly, whatever effects it might have hoped to obtain, it could have none in the guidance of public life, but rather in persuading men to renounce it altogether in order to retire to the cloister. Such could not be the aim of Machiavelli, who rather sought to discover by study of society, the art of government and the art of leading men to a practical and definite end.

Nevertheless, to him this could not be a necessary and preestablished end; for, in his eyes, society had no necessary scope resultant from the laws of human nature. On the contrary, it depended, as we have already seen, solely on the will of the politician and the legislator, whose actions likewise became arbitrary. Given an end, of whatever nature, science should be able to find the means to attain it. When the legislator was a good man, and his object the greatness of his country, he was glorious; if, instead, his aim was the ruin of his country and its liberties, he was infamous. In either case science would have been of equal assistance to him; it mattered not whether that science were good or bad, but merely whether it were true or false, accordingly as it did or did not teach the road to success. And at all events, it was always the end that justified or condemned, never the means

[1] "He who begins to read the history of the Middle Ages is alternately amused and provoked by the seeming absurdities that meet him at every step. He finds writers proclaiming, amidst universal assent, magnificent theories which no one attempts to carry out." The divergence between the theory and practice of life has always been very great, observes the same writer, but "in the Middle Ages, this perpetual opposition of theory and practice was peculiarly abrupt. Men's impulses were more violent, and their conduct more reckless than is often witnessed in modern society; while the absence of a criticizing and measuring spirit made them surrender their minds more unreservedly than they would now do, to a complete and imposing theory" (Bryce, "The Holy Roman Empire," pp. 145, 146).

extremely slow. Beginning in the Middle Ages with the study of the Roman Law, it shared the progress of the latter in the Renaissance, reached completion in the eighteenth century, and attained victory with the French Revolution that openly proclaimed the equality of mankind.[1] That there was some kinship in this respect between the Revolution and our Italian Communes is proved by the laws of the Communes. For these are sometimes expressed in a tone and with a declaration of general principles, reminding us of the edicts of the Convention; as, for instance, in the law by which the Florentines abolished slavery in 1289, and in the others which afterwards, when collected together, constituted the "Ordinances of Justice." Even in the language of the historians we may find further evidence of this resemblance; and one of the more convincing is to be found in the words attributed by Machiavelli to a man of the people, who, during the Revolt of the Ciompi (1378), tried to rouse the populace against the nobility. "Nor must you let yourselves be cowed," said he, "by that nobility of blood of which they make boast to us; for all men, having had the same beginning, are of equally ancient birth, and nature has made them all in the same fashion. Were we all stripped naked you would find us alike; dress us in their clothes and they in ours, without doubt we should seem noble and they mean, forasmuch as it is only poverty and riches that makes us unequal."[2]

But whatever the history of this conception of the absolute and immutable equality of man, it is certain that Machiavelli had the utmost faith in it, and that it had several noteworthy effects on his mode of thought. And the first of its effects was to render it impossible for him to establish a relative standard for the various judgment of political actions and conduct, according to the variation of the times, social conditions and morality of nations. To him, all that had been opportune, necessary and useful at one time, became logically justified for ever. Besides, if unable to discover a relative criterion of morals for the judgment of different epochs, neither could he discover it when, in one and the same society, he beheld the same men obeying very diverse laws of conduct in public and private life. Certainly it was not possible for him to suppress this diversity; for, in fact, one of his principal merits was that of having perceived and studied it, without averting his glance from conscientious scruples. But although he discerned this difference, it was not possible for him to discover any true relation between the two orders of facts, so as to trace them back to common

[1] See the standard work by Sir Henry Main. "Ancient Law," ch. iii. and iv London, Murray, 1878, seventh edition

[2] Machiavelli, "Storie," in the "Opere," vol i. p 166.

But it is precisely this that terrifies us. On hearing the calm enumeration of the cases in which a statesman *ought* to lie, deceive, and betray, we are seized by a violent and irresistible revulsion of feeling, forcing us to declare that treason and immorality may destroy States, but cannot erect them. Nor can we in any way renounce this conviction; and it is easier for us to admit that Machiavelli was a monster. Only, however persistent this feeling, and however justifiable, it certainly does not assist us to a verdict on the doctrines of Machiavelli, and still less does it help us to discover the source of his errors, so as to be able to avoid them, after measuring their extent and their consequences. And even less can this feeling serve for a standard, since it too frequently leads us astray. For it continually urges us to exaggeration, not only because the public and private morality of our own times is far higher than that of Machiavelli's day; but because there is a barrier of misapprehension between him and his modern readers that has to be overcome before we can judge him with impartiality. These misapprehensions, augmented by the extravagant language he so frequently adopts, arise from our confronting his individual errors, and those of his time, with our own, which are of a totally different nature. Once persuaded that laws, institutions, society, and governments are the growth of the human mind; that they progress, decline, and become corrupt simultaneously with it; we cannot admit the possibility of the accomplishment of social morality by means of individual immorality, nor that what is evil in one sphere of action can be converted into good in another, when our conscience is always one and the same. We may admit that Pagan morality was different from Christian, mediæval morality from our own; for it is practically recognized that human nature was different in those times. It is less easy for us to allow that among the same people, and at the same time, moral conduct might and ought to be subject to different rules in different spheres of human activity, or that the same actions might have a different value. Falsehood and deceit are always immoral, and must and always will be condemned by us. Yet in practice we are driven to contradictions. In war it is still allowable to delude our enemies in order to get the better of them; we recompense the deserter from the enemy, who betrays his country, and we can even praise a successful ambuscade. In a duel this would be murder; but a feint that throws our adversary off his guard, and exposes him to easier destruction, is admissible according to the laws of honour, whereas, in ordinary life, all falsehood is rigorously excluded from the conduct of an honest man. In the same way we daily repeat that genuine diplomacy, genuine politics always loyally adhere to the

required for reaching that end. To condemn an action that, although apparently iniquitous or cruel had been found necessary for the safety of the country, or security of the State, implied an attempt to judge political conduct by the standards of private life, and to render impossible any science of statecraft that was not based upon the imagination. His premises once established, the nature of his mind inexorably urged him to the logical consequence; and in the belief that he was revealing new and useful truths to the world he did not shrink from the evil reputation conferred upon him by those who failed to comprehend his motives.

But for the attainment of his end, it was requisite for him to find some rational elements in history and society without which they could not be subjects of scientific inquiry. Thus, by means of the historic method he was led to discover the logical connection of events, but without ever directing his attention to any *à priori* philosophical theory of the human mind, and almost without cognizance of any theory of the kind. Even when this connection became clear to him, and he could trace throughout history and society something in the nature of an occult design, being unable to account for all this in the manner of the theologians by declaring God to be its sole author; having no conception of impersonal forces and their regulating laws, nor able to trace back the work of social development to the human mind as to its primary source, he referred all things to the legislator in whom all things were personified. The legislator thus became, as it were, the creator and arbiter of society, subject to no guidance from the popular conscience, nor under any obligation to obey it; having no part with it, nor being bound to it in any way. Hence political action appeared to him as independent even of the conscience of him who performed it: almost as a natural phenomenon, of which men might tranquilly investigate the cause, force and effect. How, indeed, could he judge it according to the rules of a social conscience whose existence he did not recognize, nor by the rules of private conscience, when he placed the legislator above the law? The legislator might be a good man, and yet, precisely by excess of goodness, pursue a polity fatal to society; he might be a villain, and yet succeed in saving society. Thus political deeds lost the value of human actions, they almost seemed deprived of any human or personal element, and the legislator who performed them seemed to repeat with Hamlet: "'Tis conscience that makes cowards of us all!" He therefore tried to stifle the inconvenient voice, abandoned all half-measures, and without farther hesitation marched inexorably towards his aim.

effect; to a certain extent, indeed, the one always shares the nature of the other. Nevertheless, we must also admit that the same action has a very different value in the different ranges of social activity, precisely on account of the different ends the latter have in view, and of the different effect the former produces. In private life, together with our own welfare, we have also to promote that of our neighbour; in public life all private interests must be subordinated, and when necessary, sacrificed, to the general welfare. Therefore, in public life, the individual is of less value than in private.

Besides, the existence of a real and substantial difference is in general terms admitted by all, and is keenly brought home to every one passing suddenly from private into public life. Here the first impression received by him is that of the existence of a moral logic of an entirely novel kind, inasmuch as it differs from, and sometimes, at least apparently, contradicts that which he had hitherto known and practised. Where Machiavelli blundered was in regarding the one as altogether independent of the other, and in discovering no relation between them. We, on the contrary, not only perceive this relation, but also see that both depend from the same principles; that they have a common starting-point and tend to a common end. Nevertheless this relation is still somewhat confused in our minds; we have not yet been able to define it scientifically, and, even to the present day, this remains one of the chief obstacles to the foundation of a genuine science of practical politics.[1] Our very imperfect and uncertain knowledge of a relation of which no doubt can be entertained, urges us to dispose of the difficulty by too readily granting the possibility of suppressing all real difference between public and private morality, by means of proclaiming their identity. This is where we blunder. Thus, on the one hand, we find ourselves in the midst of prejudices and errors opposed to those of Machiavelli,

demandoit · Quel remède?—Nul remède, feis ie, s'il feust véritablement gehenné (*tourmenté*) entre ces deux extrêmes, *sed videat ne quæratur latebra perjurio*. Il falloit le faire; mais s'il le feit sans regret, s'il ne luy greva de le faire, c'est signe que sa conscience est en mauvais termes" (Montaigne, "Essais," vol. iv bk. iii. ch. i. pp. 351, 352. Paris, Tardieu-Denesle, 1828, p. 16).

[1] In order to perceive how great is still the uncertainty of modern science on this question, it is enough to read any treatise upon politics We may quote that of Doctor Holtzendorff, "Die Principien der Politik," Berlin, 1869, and especially pp 151 and fol of the chapter entitled. "Das Verhaltniss der Moral zur Politik." The author, as usual, attacks Machiavelli for his immorality; but admits, nevertheless, that political morality is different from private; he insists on their relation, on their community of principles, and combats all immorality in politics But, then, at p. 175, we meet with several "Streitfragen," in which the contradiction that is so difficult to explain again comes to the surface.

truth, and are subject to the same rules as our private actions; that indeed it is precisely on this account we bear so harshly upon Machiavelli. But let us take notice whether that which we say and write is really in unison with that which we *do*, for his concern was with actions, not with ideas and words.

When Machiavelli asserts that the Statesman should play the fox as well as the lion, our horror is boundless. But when beneath our own eyes a powerful nation is erected chiefly by the work of a great Statesman, who knows precisely how to play the fox and the lion, how to crush the foe, and, when necessary, deceive him; who makes use of all men, and then throws them aside like worn-out tools the instant they cease to serve his ends; what is the verdict pronounced upon him by the public conscience of Europe? Does it regard the means or the end? Does it pronounce him immoral, or does it not rather style him a great politician, when everything he has done was solely for the advantage of his country? It is related of the greatest of our own statesmen that at the time when he was most zealously and efficiently labouring for the redemption of our country, he was heard to earnestly exclaim: I am sometimes compelled to ask myself, whether I am still an honest man, or am becoming a scoundrel? This would prove nothing against the morality of his character, but would very clearly prove that the conflict to which we have alluded, is going on even at present and to the extent of assuming tragic proportions in the honest conscience of the patriot who sacrifices everything to his country. "Vice n'est ce pas," remarked Montaigne, exactly in allusion to the difficulties of this kind by which the Statesman is often confronted, "car il a quitté sa raison à une plus universelle et puissante raison."[1]

And what, then, can be his true justification, if not the end he has had in view, the result that he has accomplished? The disgust excited in us by the repetition of the phrase:—the end justifies the means,—partly comes from this being the sinister maxim of the Jesuits. But we must not forget that the Jesuits sanctioned the use of every means to accomplish their end of subjecting the State to the Church, the Church to the Company, and that such end was in no way justified, nor justifiable. We may, of course, reject the maxim, since it is certain that no good is born of evil, and that the means is not independent of the end it is intended to

[1] "Le prince, quand une urgent circonstance et quelque impetueux et inopiné accident du besoing de son estât luy faiet gauchir sa parole et sa foy ou aultrement le iecte hors de son debvoir ordinaire, doibt attribuer cette necessité à un coup de a verge divine: vice n'est ce pas, car il a quitté sa raison à une plus universelle et puissante raison; mais certes c'est malheur: de maniére qu' à quelqu' un qui me



and in a moral world very different from his; while, on the other, we have a science of politics that is not yet solidly established, and so far having neither incontrovertible canons, nor an incontrovertible standard. Hence all will see the enormous difficulties to be encountered when trying to arrive at an accurate judgment of Machiavelli in the time when he was laying the first foundations of a science that has made so little progress since his day. Hence, also, the lengthy train of interpreters, admirers, and detractors, never coming to an understanding of the real meaning, the recondite and mysterious aims of this man, who always clearly expressed all that he intended to say. Never, in short, was there a less Machiavellian man than Machiavelli; and we might with greater justice accuse him of cynicism, than of filling his writings with premeditated reticences or hidden intentions.

For if we place him precisely in his own age, and follow him attentively and without prejudice, we perceive that, on entering the path that we so often find beset with danger and difficulty, he was making a daring and gigantic effort at the investigation of the true reality of things, by resolutely shaking himself loose from the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages had subordinated the State to the Church by confounding them with each other, just as they had confounded public and private rights; had subordinated politics to religion by means of moral doctrine. Supreme power and public offices had assumed a feudal shape, and almost the shape of private property, thus causing an inextricable confusion both in the practice and the theory of mankind.[1] Therefore when we find Machiavelli the first to regard the phenomena of society and history as natural phenomena; when we find him studying their laws and connection, examining the possible effect upon society of the labours of the Statesman without concerning himself with individual judgments or prejudices, with religious or moral condemnations, then suddenly, and almost forgetful of our scruples, we seem to recognize the flash of genius, to be witnesses,

[1] We may quote a few brief and lucid observations of Dr. Bluntschli on this question: "Uber den Unterschied der mittelalterlicher und der modernen Staatsidee. Ein wissenschaflicher Vortrag." "Indem das Mittelalter von Gott aus den Staat betrachtete, konfundirte, es noch vielfache Politik und Religion, Staat und Kirche (p. 10) . . . Die heutigen Streitigkeiten zwischen dem Staat und der Kirche sind daher unbedeutend im Vergleich mit denen des Mittelalters (p. 15). Das Mittelalter vermengte ferner offentliches und Privatrecht: widerum eine natürliche Folge seines Gedankenganges . . . Daher vermischten sich die beiderlei Rechte in den Verstellungen und in den Istitutionen. Daher nahm das Mittelalter keinen Anstoss daran, dass alle öffentlichen Aemter mit dem Grundbesitz verbunden wurden und erblich von Vater auf Sohn uberging wie diese" (pp. 16, 17).

Now all this is exactly what Machiavelli aimed at destroying in order to arrive at the modern State, of which he was the first to form a scientific conception.

that in politics the mere semblance of good is useful, whereas goodness of intention is sometimes injurious to the Statesman, then truth thus exaggerated is converted into falsehood. If the aim of all politics should be, as he eloquently affirms, the national greatness, to which all private interest must be sacrificed, then no one can deny that only the good and generous soul can be truly devoted to that aim, and really competent to promote it.

Yet in order to prove that personal goodness and political capacity are different things, Machiavelli takes particular delight in showing how great may be sometimes the political utility of a thoroughly bad man; and not having, nor indeed in his day being able to conceive, any clear idea of the civil and moral progress of human society, he thought that what was justifiable on some one occasion must always be justified. He discerned no substantial difference between the means used by some savage chieftain for the establishment of social order and those to be employed by the prince of an already advanced State. If to this day history can praise the character of William the Conqueror, who put out his prisoners' eyes, and had their hands and feet cut off, without ever yielding to any touch of pity,[1] it might well be difficult for Machiavelli to recognize that in different times such means could only be employed by a monster, and would cause the immediate overthrow of him who should resort to them. This was exactly because he failed to see, as we see, that there are bonds of connection between the public and private conscience, and that men are not always the same, but continually changing. Similarly, also, when admiring the deeds of Cæsar Borgia, almost as though they were a work of art, he failed to perceive that the Duke had overshot the mark, and scandalized even that most scandalous age, so that sooner or later his enterprizes were doomed to ruin, and both he and his father, their shrewdness, talent, and luck notwithstanding, had built upon sand through too outrageously trampling on the human conscience. And all this is made still more intolerable to us by the singular language that, as we have noted, Machiavelli so frequently employed. Words commonly used in praise of the noblest actions of private life are frequently devoted by him to the eulogy of actions that would be deemed iniquitous in private life,

[1] "The full grandeur of his indomitable will, his large and patient statesmanship, the loftiness of aim which lifts him out of his age had still to be disclosed But there never was a moment from his boyhood when he was not among the greatest of men. . . . His vengeance had no touch of human pity. William tore out the eyes of the prisoners he had taken, cut off their hands and feet, and flung them into the town At the close of his greatest victory he refused Harold's body a grave" (J R. Green, "A Short History of the English People." London, Macmillan, 1878, at pp 71, 72).

class. The interests of this class became identical with those of the State, and traditions gradually arose supplying the place of principles. Now that democracy invades everything, all men may sooner or later attain to a share in the government. It continually happens that individuals are transported of a sudden from private to public life, and without any established traditions of hereditary political training, wherefore, unless there be sound principles furnishing settled rules for the safeguard of State interests in the midst of continual change, political corruption will become the scourge of our democratic governments, and endanger their existence. For although there be a real difference between political and private morality, certainly this does not imply that there is no difference between moral and immoral policy, nor that the latter is less destructive to State and nation, than private immorality to the individual and the family.

Nevertheless, all this should not prevent us from recognizing the immense progress we have made, and the distance that divides us from Machiavelli. In our conception, the Statesman must be one with the society that he rules, the which society has a personality and a conscience in relation with the individual conscience from which it is derived, and with which therefore it cannot be in open contradiction. Society submits to certain special laws of its own, and has definite aims and purposes, chief of which is the moral improvement of mankind. Whenever the politician and the legislator deviate from this purpose, they violate the most sacred laws of nature and history. It was another of Machiavelli's errors to regard only the grandeur and power of the State, without any consideration for the individual; almost as though man were made for the State instead of the State for man. Yet a political action, whatever its independent value, is nevertheless the action of a man, and therefore cannot be void of every personal and individual element. If I succour the poor, without my left hand knowing that which my right doeth, my action may certainly be good and yet of no political value; if instead, without being stirred by Christian charity, but only in the accomplishment of an official duty, I make a public donation to the poor and wish it to be known to all men, my action may be politically good and yet have no farther moral value. Nevertheless, it would be exceeding the bounds of truth to assert that the existence of a feeling of Christian charity can add nothing to the political action that is only valuable by its exterior results, quite irrespective of its intrinsic worth. Carried away by his irrepressible imagination, Machiavelli was often led into wild exaggeration when trying to distinguish between these two categories of facts. When he reaches the point of asserting

moral science, and who, inspired by patriotism, love of truth and liberty, and real ardour for the public good, did not shrink from exposing his name to the contumely of many after generations.

To set Machiavelli completely in his own time, and the better to comprehend him, nothing can be more useful than to examine him side by side with Guicciardini. And this has now been made easier by the publication of the latter's "Considerations" on the former's "Discourses." Guicciardini certainly possessed a greater aptitude for command, a wider knowledge of men and affairs, especially of state affairs, of which he had enjoyed a far more extended experience. Also as we have already seen, without either genuine political convictions or great ideal needs, and solely concerned with making his way in the world, he was always an exact and practical observer, never led astray by fanciful speculations. Beside Machiavelli, he seems the genius of common sense, who, full of self-confidence, smilingly regards the too audacious flights, too daring creations of the genius of conjecture, and with much competency and prudence notes the latter's every inexactitude and blames his hasty and dangerous steps, but never entirely comprehends the force and majesty of his aims. Machiavelli, on his side, never listens to the counsels of prudence, for he is only satisfied when climbing by new and unexplored tracks, where he sometimes meets with ugly falls, but never loses the energy needed for resuming his ascent.

Guicciardini's opening words show the temper of his mind. Machiavelli, in treating of the origin of cities, and faithful to his maxim of men being evil by nature and made good by necessity, remarks that when cities are in barren places, their inhabitants become laborious and energetic, but that when on the contrary they are in fertile spots, their citizens abandon themselves to sloth, unless the over benignity of nature is counteracted by rigorous laws and institutions. A sterile soil, however, affords no facility for conquests. On this account the Romans founded their city in a fertile spot which supplied them with means and opportunity for conquest, while they remedied the rest by most severe enactments to fit the people for war, and which Machiavelli then proceeds to enumerate. At this point Guicciardini, who although a great admirer of the military capacity of the Romans had less admiration for their government and policy, seems to have suddenly lost patience. Rome, he remarks, was situated in a fertile spot, but without outlying territory, and surrounded by warlike tribes, hence it was obliged to extend its dominion by force of arms and treaties. And this is what always follows, "if not in a city desirous of living *after a philosophical method*, at

whenever, according to his creed, they might be useful or necessary in public life. He does this the better to emphasize the difference between the one and the other life, and not only without scruple or hesitation, but with positive enthusiasm, especially when it is a question of actions performed in defence of the country. But no explanation can ever reconcile our ears to the sound of *honourable frauds*, *generous cruelties*, and *glorious wickednesses*. Yet, urged on by an inexorable logic, spurred by an irresistible desire for the discovery of general laws and rules, convinced that he was tracing an unknown road, and founding upon a solid basis a new science of practical utility to mankind, and with his usual leaning to absolute extremes, he drew the consequences of his premises without shrinking from anything or caring for what might be said of him.

We have often full right to blame him for this; but our just censure should not blind us to the reality of things, nor to the difficulty of the problem that he first dared to attack, and that we have not yet solved. When to this day Christian churches contain pictures of Judith exhibiting the head of Holofernes to an exultant populace, a Judith almost classed among the Saints; when we try to rouse the admiration of our schoolboys for Horace, the murderer of his own sister, do we ever think of the terms we should apply to these deeds were we to judge them on the same principles by which we have so often condemned Machiavelli? These deeds are exactly of the order that he styled *glorious crimes*. Undoubtedly, had the times been less corrupt, the phenomenon of Machiavellism would have taken another form; and had Machiavelli owned a purer and more ideal mind, recoiling from all cynicism, and an intenser love of virtue, he, too, would have adopted a different tone, and, without perceiving that which in those days it was impossible for him to perceive, would have sometimes given vent to the revolt and suffering of his own conscience. Nothing is less rational than to omit to take account of the inevitable errors of an age, and their necessary consequences; nothing is more unjust than the resolve to regard such errors as the crimes of the individual, and then pretend to explain all things by the corruption of the individual and his times. Consequently, Mohl was quite right to say that if Machiavelli had sinned, he had been still more sinned against[1] Posterity must yet render justice to him who, although certainly far from blameless, dared to attempt the solution of one of the most tremendous problems of

[1] "Machiavelli hat gesundigt, aber noch mehr ist gegen ihn gesundigt worden" (Mohl, *cit. op.*, p. 541).

In fact, as we have seen, Machiavelli declares that by nature men would be very wicked, did not the laws curb them and constrain them to be good. And, he even adds, that were they really good no laws would be required. According to our ideas, laws being made by men, and the outcome of their modes of thought and feeling, it clearly results that, were there no germ of goodness in men, we could have neither good laws nor the virtues derived from them. But Guicciardini, who neither held our ideas nor accepted those of Machiavelli, contents himself with simply remarking that the Secretary is too absolute in his assertions, since men are disposed to goodness and only stray from it through motives of personal interest. Whoever, he says, should have a natural preference for evil would be a monster. Laws, therefore, should be so conceived as to restrain him who may seek to do evil, but should also hold out rewards for the encouragement of goodness[1]

But even Machiavelli had said, and with great eloquence, that whoever, on weighing good against evil, should prefer evil, could not be of human birth. Nevertheless, on studying society, he found that private interest was continually opposed to public interest, and that the latter could never gain the victory without the aid of law and violence; and as he chiefly desired to assure this victory, and beheld in it the source of all civil virtues, so therefore he considered them to be derived from law and violence Guicciardini, on the other hand, being both in theory and practice far more tolerant towards private and personal interests, remedied everything by establishing the balance of these interests and conceived the government and the State to constitute that balance, whereas Machiavelli regarded government and State as a superior and stronger unity justified in maintaining itself by the overthrow of all private resistance. Besides, as he thought government to be personified in the legislator, who imposed it on society, so he looked upon every social impulse as an impulse from without; and thus even virtue itself was made compulsory on the citizens by law. Guicciardini saw nothing, or at least examined nothing, but unconnected sentences and observations, and therefore contented himself with blaming Machiavelli's exaggerations, and tempering and attenuating his excesses of language, leaving aside all questions he deemed too general and consequently idle and theoretical.

In the "Discourses" it is frequently repeated, that there is no healthier nor more useful means of assuring liberty than that of slaying the sons of Brutus. Guicciardini, treating of this

[1] "Considerazione" on chap. iii of bk. i of the "Discorsi."

all events in those wishing to be governed in the usual way of the world, as it is necessary to be."[1]

Then, proceeding to examine what the "Discourses" have to say of various forms of government, he approves of the manner in which they are expounded according to the ideas of Polybius. But, on reaching, in the ninth chapter, the decisive point where it is stated that the founder of a republic should stand alone, and that for this reason Romulus did well to kill his brother, what is the attitude assumed by Guicciardini with regard to Machiavelli? "Doubtless one alone can establish order better than many together, and doubtless in an anarchical city he deserves praise, who, being otherwise unable to establish order, succeeds in establishing it by violence and fraud and extraordinary measures." "But let us pray God that there be no necessity for obtaining order in this fashion, inasmuch as men are fallible, and he who establishes order may easily be seized with the desire to become a tyrant. And as regards the life of Romulus, we should carefully consider it, for it seems that he was put to death by the Senate exactly because he sought to grasp too much power in his own hands. Let us carefully consider it."[2] Then where, in the pursuance of his discourse, Machiavelli so eloquently describes the magnanimity of the true legislator, who, on the completion of his task, proves his disinterestedness and loftiness of aim by refraining from leaving the State to his heirs, and entrusting it to the care of the people to ensure the duration of its liberty and strength, Guicciardini coldly remarks, that these ideas are "easier to describe in books and in the imagination of mankind, than to carry into practical effect."[3] Therefore, without any discussion, he grants Machiavelli's starting-point, and even goes so far as to allow that fraud, violence, and deceit may be praiseworthy in the case in question. But while recognizing the fact, as it was then practically recognized by all, he refuses to frame any theory upon, or deduce any consequence from it, and seeks rather to attenuate and temper it by moderation of tone and in accordance with the suggestions of common sense. He will not admit the possibility of that grand generosity of the true legislator, in which Machiavelli so implicitly believes; and yet charges Machiavelli, at the same time, with having too low an opinion of mankind.

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. i.: "Considerazioni intorno ai Discorsi del Machiavelli sulla prima Deca di Tito Livio." These "Considerazioni" treat of the twenty-eight chapters of the first book of the "Discorsi," of the proem and seven chapters of the second book, and finally of three chapters of the third book. See the "Considerazioni" on chap. 1 of bk. 1. of the "Discorsi.'

[2] "Considerazione" on chap. ix. of bk i. of the "Discorsi."

[3] Ibid. on chap. x. of bk. 1 of the "Discorsi."

But the principal theme of the "Discourses" was, that, in politics, deceit is frequently a necessary means for the attainment even of a worthy end, and the conclusion drawn is, that it may therefore be a duty to employ deceit. Guicciardini is evidently of the same opinion, but considers the maxim so excessively daring that he will neither unreservedly admit, nor even discuss it in detail. So he confines himself to the more practical question of examining when fraud is or is not successful in reaching a given end.

We have had occasion to notice that Machiavelli makes, in his "Discourses," several accurate and profound remarks on the history of parties in Rome and Florence, and draws the conclusion that party strife was ruinous in Florence, because the victory of the people implied the destruction of nobles; but that party warfare had been advantageous in Rome, because there the people had confined itself to fighting for its just rights, and on obtaining the victory, shared the government with the patricians These reflections are so just that they form the basis and foundation of his History of Florence, and help to constitute the originality of that work. But Guicciardini, in his examination of them, as usual concentrates his attention on the too absolute manner in which they are asserted, and then says: "It certainly was not strife that made Rome powerful; on the contrary, it would have been far better had the patricians at once accorded the people a share in the government. To commend disunion is like commending the illness of a sick man for the sake of the good remedies afterwards administered to him.[1] Appius Claudius was not overthrown because he had joined with the patricians against the people when he should have done the contrary, nor for the other reason adduced by Machiavelli; he fell because he tried to extinguish the Republic at a time when Rome had good laws, devout customs, and an ardent love of liberty. Manlius Capitolinus took the popular side in order to overcome the patricians, and likewise fell; Sulla leant upon the patricians; the same was done in Florence by the Duke of Athens, who then forfeited their favour by his own fault. History is full of varied examples, and each example has good reasons of its own; but these events cannot supply us with any fixed rule, since we must draw our conclusions from the temper of the city and the state of things, the which state varies according to the conditions of the times, and other casual circumstances.[2]

But the point upon which Guicciardini abandons his usual moderation in favour of a violent, or at least a very decided tone, is that where he speaks of the people which he despised and almost

[1] "Considerazione" on chap. iv. of bk 1 of the "Discorsi."
[2] Ibid. on chap. xl. of bk 1 of the "Discorsi."

subject, says: "It is very difficult to train to liberty a people unacquainted with it. In such cases the best plan is to establish a temperate government, and after speedy chastisement of its opponents, leave every one else to live in peace. Although, however, it may often be necessary to shed blood, the new government ought not to desire that Brutus should have sons in order to increase its reputation by putting them to death; it were far better for Brutus to have no sons. But when it is a question of a prince held in detestation by a people enamoured of liberty, then there is no remedy save bloodshed. And it is childish to hold with Machiavelli that Clearchus murdered the chieftains to give satisfaction to the people that was hostile to him; we may rather believe that the chieftains, too, were his enemies, and that he therefore slaughtered them under false pretences. The sole remedy in these cases is to win adherents with sufficient power to subdue the people, or else to crush and annihilate it, so as to render it incapable of action, and people the State with fresh inhabitants unaccustomed to liberty."[1] And after these words, which while attacking Machiavelli, yet make large concessions to his ideas, Guicciardini immediately tries to tone down his own too absolute expression of opinion. "It is, however, necessary that the prince should have the courage to resort to extraordinary measures whenever they may be required; but he should also have the wisdom to neglect no opportunity of establishing affairs with humanity and benevolence, never accepting as an absolute rule the method prescribed by the writer who always finds great delight in extraordinary and violent remedies.[2]

He pursues the same mode of criticism where Machiavelli asserts that whenever it is a question of rising from a humble position to lofty estate, force alone is not sufficient, and must be accompanied by fraud. He draws the following distinction: "If it be a question of dissimulation and cunning, it may be true that force alone, very seldom, though I will not say never—that being too strong a term—suffices to raise men from low to lofty estate. But if downright deception and violation of faith be intended, then there have been many who have won kingdoms without fraud, like Alexander the Great, and Cæsar, who proclaimed his ambitious intent. It may also be disputed whether fraud is always a sure means of attaining greatness, because, although grand blows may be struck by deceit, yet the reputation of being a deceiver will afterwards prevent you from accomplishing your purpose."[3]

[1] "Considerazione" on chap. xvi. of bk. i. of the "Discorsi."
[2] Ibid. on chap. xxvi. of bk. i. of the "Discorsi."
[3] Ibid. on chap. xiii. of bk. ii. of the "Discorsi."

than that against Pisa, and an eye-witness of conflicts of far greater importance. Nevertheless his contempt for speculative theories prevented him from having any of the original ideas of Machiavelli, either on the art of war in general or the method of organizing militia forces in particular. His contemporrary, on the contrary, with a much narrower experience had investigated things far more closely. Guicciardini, therefore, again tried to confound the author of the "Discourses" by pointing out all the exaggerations which had escaped him, and frequently proved him at fault; as, for instance, where he blames Machiavelli for considering firearms and fortresses of light value, for the mere sake of imitating and perpetually citing the example of the Romans.

"We must not," he rightly says, "laud antiquity to the point of depreciating all modern institutions that were not in existence in the days of the Romans, for experience has led to the discovery of many things unthought of by the ancients, and which have become necessary now that matters are on a different footing. And it is but too evident that fortresses may sometimes be necessary. The argument alleged against them (by Machiavelli), namely, that they encourage bad princes to persevere in evil, is very frivolous, since in that case we ought to have neither defences, arms, nor soldiers. We should not avoid useful things from the dread lest security should encourage us to evil. Ought we then to blame medicine, because faith in it might render us less cautious in preserving our health?"[1] He was right upon this point, for certainly Machiavelli indulged in great exaggeration in his "Discourses," so much so, that in other writings he rather tried to modify his theories, and afterwards became one of the most active promoters of the fortification of Florence. But Guicciardini even failed to seize his meaning where he maintained, and with much justice, that new States should rely on the strength of the people and their armed citizens, and not upon fortresses, as the petty Italian tyrants had done and were still doing, almost always to their own destruction. He failed to understand him, because he would never listen to any praise of the people, and always insisted that, "considering how often the people, even when well treated, have shown so little reason, and how much they hanker after new things, it is necessary to depend in some measure upon force, and to inspire them with terror."[2]

It cannot be denied that upon really practical questions, the good sense, temper, and experience of Guicciardini, often gave him a decided advantage over Machiavelli. But, on the other hand,

[1] "Considerazione" on chap xxiv. of bk. ii. of the "Discorsi." [2] Ibid.

hated, and which Machiavelli loved, admired, and extolled. "I do not rightly understand," he says, "the meaning of the assertion, that the people should be entrusted with the guardianship of liberty. If it is intended to speak of those entitled to a share in the government, such share appertains, especially in mixed governments, as, for instance, of Rome, no less to the people than to the nobles, since the people of Rome frequently preserved the common country and the common liberty. But were it a question of making choice between a government entirely composed of patricians or entirely of plebeians, I should not stay to discuss whether the former were really better fitted to preserve, the latter to conquer; but there would be no hesitation in my choice, inasmuch as the populace is ignorant, and unfitted for either office"[1] "Where there is a multitude there is confusion, and in so great a discord of brains, with all their various judgments, various thoughts and various aims, there can be neither reasonable discussion, well founded resolve, nor decided action; . . . wherefore, and not without reason, the multitude has been likened to the waves of the sea, which, according to the blowing of the winds, run now this way and now that, without any rule." Machiavelli, on the contrary, had said that, with some reason, the voice of the people had been likened to the voice of a god. But in Guicciardini's opinion the people was a sink of ignorance, and popular governments were always ignorant. And although the Roman Republic was wise, that was because it had always been governed by the few, not by the many. Neither did it avail, he said, to recall the personal vices of princes, since the point now in question was their capacity for government, and a man of many vices might yet have great capacity as a ruler.[2] But this was exactly what was asserted by Machiavelli, who did not concern himself with the private qualities of princes, or at least only in so far as these were beneficial or harmful to the State. Certain points of resemblance notwithstanding, the two great Florentine politicians were so different in their tastes and intellectual tendencies, as to often end in misunderstanding each other. With regard to ancient Rome, Guicciardini thought Machiavelli's admiration exaggerated, and refused to accept as a model a State in which he found nothing to admire save its military organization.[3] But even upon military questions they were unable to agree. Neither of the two was a soldier by profession; but Guicciardini had enjoyed a much wider experience of warfare, having been Commissary in larger armies

[1] "Considerazione" on chap. v. of bk. i. of the "Discorsi."
[2] Ibid. on chap. lviii. of bk. i. of the "Discorsi"
[3] Ibid. on chap. xlix of bk i of the "Discorsi."

or monarchy would have been an insuperable obstacle to the liberty of the many cities which flourished during that period, and were the sources of the grand and varied culture of Italy. But Machiavelli had likewise noted that it was the free confederations, the republics and kingdoms possessing the faculty of expanding according to the Roman custom, which "desired to win, not subjects, but associates," and he always made reference to the French Parliaments as, in his opinion, the causes of that kingdom's prosperity. All this entirely escaped the notice of Guicciardini, because he refused to recognize anything beyond the actual and narrow realities amid which he lived.

Thus, from whatever point of view these two great writers are compared, we are always driven to the conclusion that the observations and precepts of Guicciardini may more readily, and often more usefully, serve as guides in the daily practice of life and affairs.[1] Machiavelli's precepts, on the contrary, open new horizons to the study of the logical and necessary connection of historical events, and to the study of human society and the action to be exercised upon it by the statesman. And to the statesman they afford rules which, although more general, are none the less practical as to the conduct to be pursued in great political crises, for which the counsels of personal experience acquired from one day to another are altogether inadequate.

[1] On the publication of Guicciardini's "Opere Inedite," Count Cavour hastened to read them, and then said to a friend: "This man had a real knowledge of affairs, and a far better comprehension of them than Machiavelli." Even Gino Capponi used to insist in familiar conversation, as he has also done in his "History," on Guicciardini's practical superiority, and surer knowledge of mankind. Capponi held that the writings of Machiavelli were "not sufficiently practical, not like the writings of one who had performed things himself, instead of witnessing their performance by others. . . . It has always appeared to me as though Machiavelli understood men in general better than the individual man, that he understood them as regarded what they did in common and with reference to public life; but that he neither studied nor understood them with reference to their individual qualities, nor to what they were at home and in the family: the which things are obstacles disregarded by speculative minds, but well understood by men practised in government" ("History of the Republic of Florence," vol. ii. p. 65). This is true and well observed; but it should be added, that Machiavelli aimed at the investigation of political, not private life; of peoples, governments, and princes, not of the individual or the family. He was the first to make a clear distinction between the two orders of research, the first therefore to initiate the modern science of politics.

even here the latter's superiority is manifest, inasmuch as he had an extraordinary faculty of regarding questions from a higher point of view and under a more general aspect. To give a final example—It has been seen with what eloquence Machiavelli affirmed, that the corruption of the Court of Rome and the temporal power of the Pope were the cause of the disunion and destruction of Italy. Guicciardini remarks upon this: "Of the Court of Rome it is impossible to speak with sufficient severity, for it is a standing infamy, an example of all that is most vile and shameful in the world. And it is also true that the Church has prevented the union of Italy in a single State; but I do not know whether this be a good or an evil. A single republic might certainly have made the name of Italy glorious, and been of the utmost profit to the capital city; but it would have proved the ruin of every other city. It is true that our division has brought many calamities upon us, although it should be remembered that the invasions of the barbarians began at the time of the Romans, exactly when Italy was united. And divided Italy has succeeded in having so many free cities, that I believe that a single republic would have caused her more misery than happiness. It is true that this might not have been the case under a monarchy, which is more impartial in the treatment of its subjects; and thus we behold France and other countries living happily under a king. Yet, whether by fate, or by the nature of men, this land has always desired liberty, and therefore has never been able to unite under one rule. The Romans succeeded in it only by their great valour and strength; but no sooner was the Republic extinguished, no sooner did the emperors' valour fail, than they easily lost their dominion. Hence I believe that if the Church has prevented the union of Italy, that it has not been for her unhappiness, inasmuch as she has thus been able to live according to her own nature."[1]

Who can fail to perceive the truth of these observations, in so far as they refer to real history, to the real Italy of the Middle Ages, and in part even of the Renaissance? But Machiavelli, with his wider vision, also saw that Europe and society at large were necessarily changing, that great nations and modern States were in course of formation, and that these, having need of much greater strength, could no longer be restricted within the microscopic boundaries of the old Republics, and must be extended. But the Church that had rendered such extension impossible for the Italy of the past, equally forbade it to the Italy of the present.

It was also true that, during the Middle Ages, a single republic

[1] "Considerazione" on chap. xii of bk. i. of the "Discorsi."

rise to such interminable disputes. We have already observed that the "Discourses" contain, as it were, the germ of all that is written in the "Prince," which expounds at much greater length one of the many themes treated in the former work, but has an immediate and practical end in view, in addition to scientific and theoretical aims. In fact, it is this double tendency of the "Prince" that has given rise to so much dispute; since many commentators only recognized its practical aim, and exaggerated this to so great an extent as to discover in the book much that does not exist in it.

In the course of his political meditations Machiavelli never restricted himself to the sole contemplation of the Greeks and Romans; he also gave much attention to real life, with a view to the accomplishment of at least a portion of his ideas. For this reason he had been contented with his position as Secretary to the Republic, was miserable now that he was condemned to idleness and poverty, and most impatient to obtain some occupation or office that always eluded his grasp. He was a spectator of the daily and marvellous rise of the power and fortunes of the Medici in Italy. Leo X., surrounded by artists and men of letters who praised him to the skies, and beloved by the Florentines, who took

O. Pagani gave an account of a visit to this villa. He was told there of another villa, beyond San Casciano, on the hill of *Sant' Angelo a Bibbione*, and which is an old castle of majestic size. On going there he was told that according to tradition this was the villa in which Machiavelli had written the "Prince"; and an old woman related to him in full detail the identical particulars narrated by Machiavelli in a letter dated the 10th of December, 1513, mentioned by us in this chapter. All this aroused great uncertainty in Signor Pagani's mind, since he could not understand how a tradition so vivid and so exact in every particular could be extant in the place without having some basis of historic truth.

However, Machiavelli's will, as Signor Pagani also allows, clearly states that his villa and farm lands were situated at Sant' Andrea in Percussina, and not in Sant' Angelo a Bibbione, where another branch of the family possessed property. Then, too, there is the document containing a minute description of Machiavelli's possessions, namely, the Report to the Officers of the Catasto, published in the first volume of the "Opere" (P. M.), p. 55, and this document clearly proves that the very modest dwelling inhabited by Machiavelli was in Sant' Andrea di Percussina. The grand old castle at Sant' Angelo a Bibbione has on the first floor, as Signor Pagani himself tells us, "an endless *suite* of rooms" So how can it be supposed that this was the *small* villa inhabited by Machiavelli? But how are we to account for the local tradition, and the account given by the old woman, and that so entirely accords with the statements in the letter of the 10th of December, 1513? It is very easy to suppose that the tradition may have been born of the letter, and related to the old woman or her predecessors by some one who had read the letter. It is proved that Machiavelli owned a small villa at Sant' Andrea di Percussina, close to the village inn, and did not own a lordly castle at Sant' Angelo a Bibbione We may also refer the reader to "Repetti's Dizionario geografico, fisico, storico;" paragraph *Percussina* (S. Andrea in).



CHAPTER IV.

The "Prince.'



E have seen that Machiavelli, having in the year 1513 retired to his villa near San Casciano,[1] and devoted himself to study, not only began the "Discourses," on which he worked intermittently for a long time, but during the same year wrote the whole of his book "Il Principe," of which the meaning and intention have given

[1] Machiavelli's villa stands on the Roman road, at rather less than seven Tuscan miles from Florence, and about three miles from San Casciano in the Pesa valley, on a spot called *Sant' Andrea in Percussina*. It is a very small and simple building, still bears its old name of the *Albergaccio*, and is used chiefly as the dwelling of a bailiff. It belongs to Count Alfredo Serristori, by whom it was inherited, together with the adjoining farm lands, constituting nearly the whole of Machiavelli's "*slender patrimony*," and which still retain their old names. Ippolita Machiavelli (the last of Niccolò's family) and the daughter of Alessandro, son of Bernardo, son of Niccolò, was married in 1610 to Pierfrancesco dei Ricci, and her daughter Cassandra, after a previous marriage, became in 1639 the wife of Senator Antonio Serristori, and in 1647 gave birth to a son named Luigi Serristori. Inside the house are inscribed these words:

NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI,
ABITÒ QUESTA SUA VILLA NELL' ANNO 1513.

In *1869* the municipality of San Casciano caused to be affixed to the outer wall the following inscription, dictated by Prof. Atto Vannucci:

A NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI,
CHE QUI MEDITÒ E PROPUGNÒ LA LIBERAZIONE D'ITALIA
SCRIVENDO LE SUE OPERE IMMORTALI
SULL' ARTE DI REGGERE E DIFENDERE CON ARMI PROPRIE GLI STATI.

IL COMUNE DI SAN CASCIANO
POSE QUESTA MEMORIA
NEL IV. CENTENARIO DELLA NASCITA
Del Grande Statista Italiano.

In the *Fanfulla della Domenica* (issue of 30th of November, 1879), Signor C.

and confederated with the new State, under the same ruler, and yet retain its actual republican form. It might be possible to extend the frontiers of the State in the direction of Ferrara and Romagna; it might even be possible for it to embrace the whole of Italy, and its prince might thus win an immortal name, and rank with great founders of States like Romulus and Lycurgus. Machiavelli's imagination had taken wing, and he could no longer arrest its flight. For the success of this scheme knowledge of statesmanship was required; and he was versed in that knowledge, having given to it the experience and study of his whole life. How could it be possible that untaught youths like Giuliano and Lorenzo, or that the Pope himself should fail to understand how useful he might be to them, to the great and immortal glory of the Medici and of Italy. For they, too, must surely love that Italy and yearn to see her converted into a great nation, and freed from the foreigners who had trampled her in the dust? Would the Medici only give him some employment, even of the humblest sort, he felt assured of winning their favour by the value of his counsels and the grandeur of his designs. And inspired by these thoughts he at last seized his pen and composed the "Prince."

The truth of all this is clearly established by the evidence of his private letters. At the beginning of 1515 the old rumour that Giuliano dei Medici was to be made Lord of Parma, Modena, Piacenza, and Reggio was revived as a positive assertion, and further that Paolo Vettori, the brother of Francesco, was to be named governor of the new State. Accordingly, on the 31st of January, Machiavelli sent a letter to Francesco Vettori on the subject of the difficulties encountered in the government of a new State, especially when composed of various parts formerly appertaining to different States. "It is requisite," he said, "to convert these various parts into members of one body and to give this body unity. This can be accomplished either by going to reside there in person, or by sending a single governor who can win the obedience of all the subjects. If Giuliano remains in Rome, as he seems disposed, and sends a governor to each place, there will be nothing but disunion and confusion." "The Duke of Valentinois, whose deeds I should always imitate were I a new prince, having recognized this necessity, named Messer Rimino[1] President of Romagna, which measure made those peoples united, submissive to his authority, well affected towards his power and

[1] Here the printed editions give the word *Monsignore* ——, and the name is wanting; but it is certain that Machiavelli here alludes to Messer Rimino or Ramiro d' Orco, as he always styled him. The man's signature, as we have previously noted, was *Remigius de Lorqua.*

pride in him, was filled with ambition for himself and his kinsmen, and made the latter rule Florence with the mildness requisite for the success of his schemes. But although by this method he increased the power of the papacy, he hardly satisfied his relations, who indeed were always complaining of being obliged, as they said, to stay and "cajole men" in Florence. To meet their wishes, therefore, the Pope was continually planning how to provide them with new States elsewhere in Italy, where they might rule like true princes, and not as the timid protectors of a republic. We know that a project for giving the kingdom of Naples to Giuliano dei Medici was frequently discussed, and that the Duchy of Urbino had been really offered to and refused by him. There was also much talk of uniting Parma, Modena, Piacenza, and Reggio into a single State under his sway. This design of Leo X. was very similar to that formed on Romagna by Alexander VI. for the benefit of his son, the Duke of Valentinois, who, according to Machiavelli, had been able to carry it out with eminent skill. The provinces of Parma and Modena were, at that time, almost as much torn by factions as Romagna had been;[1] therefore measures of nearly the same nature were required for their pacification and government. All the observations made by Machiavelli during his mission to Cæsar Borgia, all the theories upon the subject that had then flashed across his brain and been afterwards partly expounded in the "Discourses," all his political conceptions both old and new, were now revived in his memory by these events, and stirred his brain to feverish activity. The living, speaking image of the Duke was again present to him.

The moment was come to solve the problem he had so frequently studied, of how to found a new State by means of a new prince. First of all, such prince should be able to endow it with unity, by fusing various provinces into a single entity and accomplishing this fusion even by force, violence, and bloodshed; by having no scruples of any sort, and by giving it an army of its own. It would then be easy to extend its borders, and enlarge its dominions, so long as the newly acquired subjects were neither unduly oppressed, nor partially sacrificed for the good of others, as had hitherto been the case in republics. If the Pope desired to keep Florence for his own kinsmen, that city might be annexed to

[1] This is clearly seen by the letters written thence by Guicciardini in 1516, when Governor of Emilia. See his Legation to Emilia in the "Opere Inedite," vol. vii. See, too, the monograph by Signor Giovanni Levi: "Il Guicciardini e Domenico, d'Amorotto" (new edition, Bologna, Romagnoli, 1879). Also worthy of mention is the essay by A. Geffroy, "Une Autobiographie de Guichardin d'après ses œuvres inédites" "Revue des Deux Mondes," issue of 1st of February, 1874

was indispensable to constitute and organize it by the sword as the Duke had done ; that it was necessary to hold it together by unity of command, to use men as instruments, and then get rid of them as soon as they became dangerous to the State. The two lines with which he concludes the letter, refer to his perpetual hope of obtaining employment of some kind.

Another letter, and certainly the most eloquent and beautiful that ever issued from Machiavelli's pen, was that written on the 10th of December, 1513,[1] and also addressed to Vettori. In this he first gives a description of the life led by him in his rustic solitude, and then goes on to explain, with the utmost precision and frankness, in what way, and with what object, he had applied himself to the composition of the pamphlet, as he calls it, that he had just finished, and was still correcting and polishing. "Since my last misfortunes, I have led a quiet country life, and, all counted, have not passed twenty days in Florence I spent September in snaring thrushes ; but at the end of the month, even this rather tiresome sport failed me. I rise with the sun in the morning, and go into one of the woods for a couple of hours to inspect the yesterday's work, and to pass some time with the woodcutters, who have always some troubles to tell me, either of their own or their neighbours'. On leaving the wood, I go to a spring, and thence up to my *uccellare*,[2] with a book under my arm, either Dante, Petrarch, or one of the minor poets, such as Tibullus, Ovid," &c. "I read their amorous transports, and the history of their loves, recalling my own to my mind, and time passes pleasantly in these meditations. Then I betake myself to the inn by the roadside, chat with passers-by, ask news of the places whence they come, hear various things, and note the varied tastes and diverse fancies of mankind. This carries me on to the dinner hour, when in the company of my brood, I swallow whatever fare this poor little place of mine, and my slender patrimony, can afford me. Dinner over, I go back to the inn. There I generally find the host, a butcher, a miller, and a couple of brick-makers. I mix with these boors the whole day, playing at *cricca* and at *tric trac*,[3] which games give rise to a thousand quarrels and much exchange of bad language, and we generally wrangle over farthings, and our shouting can be heard at San Casciano. Steeped in this degradation my wits grow mouldy, and I vent

[1] This is the letter xxvi. in the "Opere," to which we have already referred.

[2] An *uccellare*, or *uccellanda*, is a small wooded enclosure on a hill top where decoy birds are kept, and nets stretched over the trees to snare passing flights —*Translator's note.*

[3] *Cricca*, a game of cards ; *tric-trac*, a game of dice.

full of confidence in it; and all the love they bore him, which was great considering his newness, was evoked by that measure. I think that this thing might easily be credited, by reason of its truth; and were I employed by your Paolo, that would be a means of making myself known not only to the Signore Magnifico, but to all Italy. . . . I thought it well to write to you of this, so that you might know our reasonings, and might, in case of need, pave the way for this matter."

"E nel cadere il superbo ghiottone
E 'non dimenticò però Macone."[1]

This letter clearly proves that although the "Prince" was essentially a theoretical book, the first idea of it was inspired by the design of forming a new State in Parma and Modena, or elsewhere, for the benefit of Giuliano. And it is no less clear how, in Machiavelli's mind, this conception was naturally and almost necessarily personified in Cæsar Borgia With supreme art and enormous energy, Borgia had rapidly established his State in Romagna, organized and armed it, and then had immediately turned his thoughts to greater enterprises, in order to extend his dominion over the whole of Central Italy. The patriotism and imagination of Machiavelli were alike inflamed; the figure of the Duke assumed gigantic proportions, and became transformed into the likeness of the founder of a new kingdom, of a new Italy. This was the example he proposed to the Medici, this the end for which the "Prince" was written. That in quoting and extolling the deeds of Valentinois, he formed an ideal picture of them in his mind, and that we must therefore accept his picture with certain reservations, is clearly indicated even by the fact, that in the letter in question he quotes, among other things, the instance of Messer Rimino, who was cut to pieces by order of the Duke. Can it be supposed that, when writing privately to Vettori, whose brother Paolo was to fill a post similar to that once held by Messer *Rimino in Romagna, and whose favour Machiavelli was anxious* to win—can it be supposed that he really meant to say that a prince should first make use of his ministers, and then cut them to pieces? He did not propose as models the special deeds or iniquities of the Duke, but only his shrewdness and political ability; and he maintained that in order to found a new State it

[1] Letter xl., in the "Opere," vol viii.:

"For the proud glutton, even in his fall,
Did not forget Macone."

merely to sum up the results of long experience and ripe meditation upon the history and nature of his theme. When it was finished, however, he thought that he might turn it to good account by dedicating it to the Medici.[1] The letter goes on to say that he could not allow himself to accept the invitation of Vettori, who had asked him to stay in his house, because he had some business on hand, and because in Rome he would meet the Soderini, and be obliged to pay them a visit, in which case he feared that, on his return to Florence, he might have to dismount at the Bargello, instead of alighting at his own door, inasmuch as the government being new, was very suspicious. But for this fear he would have willingly visited Rome. Then again recurring to the subject of the dedication, he says: "I have spoken with Casavecchia as to whether it might or might not be well to offer this pamphlet of mine to Messer Giuliano. Also whether, if I offer it, it were better to send it or present it in person. On the one hand I doubt if the Magnificent would read it, and Ardinghelli[2] might end by usurping the honour of my labours. On the other hand, I am urged to offer it by the pressure of necessity," "for I am wearing out and cannot go on long in this fashion, without being rendered contemptible from sheer poverty; besides, I would that these Medici lords should take me into their service, even if they began by setting me to roll stones; for if I could not then succeed in gaining their favour, no one but myself would be to blame. And touching this thing of mine, if it were only read, it would be seen that I have neither wasted nor slept away the fifteen years I have given to the study of the art of government, and every one should be glad to make use of a man who has acquired so much experience at others' expense. And there need be no doubt as to my good faith, since, having always kept faith, I could hardly learn to break it now, and one who, like myself, has been honest and faithful for forty-three years, runs no risk of

[1] There is positive proof that Machiavelli hoped to obtain employment from Giuliano dei Medici, who, as Busini states, was then supported by the Liberals A letter addressed to Giuliano at the instance of Pietro Ardinghelli, dated 14th of February, 1515, informs him that Cardinal dei Medici had asked Ardinghelli whether there was truth in the report that Giuliano had taken Machiavelli into his service; and, on Ardinghelli's reply that he neither knew nor believed the report, the Cardinal had rejoined, Neither do I believe it; nevertheless, since they write to us from Florence on the matter, tell him (Giuliano) to do nothing of the kind, and "remind him that it would neither suit his needs nor ours." ("Li ricordo che non è il bisogno suo nè il nostro.") *Vide* "Archivio Storico Italiano," series iii. vol xix p. 231. This collection, formerly part of the Torrigiani MSS., is now in the Florence Archives.

[2] The Florentine, Pietro Ardinghelli, secretary to Leo X., was considered a deceitful intriguer.

my rage at the malignity of fate, content to let it crush me in this fashion, if only to see whether it will not take shame of its work."

So far, this gives us a picture of Machiavelli, who throughout his life trained his intellect by reading old authors, studying his fellow men and meditating upon them, and who, although accustomed to live with the people, yet felt a continual need of nourishing his imagination upon poetry. But then, changing his style, he enters upon a graver theme, and at last tells us how he composed his book. "At nightfall I return home and seek my writing room, and, divesting myself on its threshold of my rustic garments, stained with mud and mire, I assume courtly attire, and thus suitably clothed, enter within the ancient courts of ancient men, by whom, being cordially welcomed, I am fed with the food that *alone* is mine, and for which I was born, and am not ashamed to hold discourse with them and inquire the motives of their actions; and these men in their humanity reply to me, and for the space of four hours I feel no weariness, remember no trouble, no longer fear poverty, no longer dread death, my whole being is absorbed in them. And since Dante says, that there could be no science without retaining that which is heard,[1] I have recorded that which I have acquired from the conversation of these worthies, and composed a pamphlet, 'De Principatibus,' in which I plunge as deeply as I can into cogitations upon this subject, discussing the nature of princedom, of how many species it consists, how these are to be acquired, how they are maintained, why they are lost; and if you ever cared for any of my scribbles, this one ought not to displease you, and it should be especially welcome to a new prince; for the which reason I dedicate it to His Magnificence, Giuliano. Filippo Casavecchia[2] has seen it, and can give you details of the thing itself, and of the conversations I have held with him thereon, although I am still employed in fattening and polishing it."

So complete is the evidence furnished by this passage, that we cannot understand how, after it had once been read, there could be so much dispute about the supposed hidden intentions of the "Prince." No matter what occasion first suggested the idea of the book, it is plain that Machiavelli neither wrote it to suit the moment, nor for the purpose of dedicating it to the Medici, but

[1] . . . "che non fa scienza
Senza lo ritenere avere inteso."
"Paradiso," Canto v. 41–42.

[2] Casavecchia had formerly been Commissary of the Republic at Barga, Fivizzano, and other places, whence he had written Machiavelli many letters, some of which are given in the Appendix of the Italian edition.

count in the least upon the "Prince," which, in fact, was never of any benefit to its author.[1]

In the letter of dedication addressed to Lorenzo, Machiavelli says that, in the hope of winning his princely favour, he begs to offer him his most precious possession, namely, the knowledge of the deeds of great men, acquired by lengthened experience of modern, and continued study of ancient affairs. He therefore proposes to teach him in a short time, that which he (the author) had only acquired with infinite pains and trouble. Nor should he be charged with presumption, since exactly as mountains are best seen and delineated from plains, and plains from mountains, so, to completely understand the people, it is necessary to be a prince, and to completely understand princes it is necessary to be one of the people.[2]

This short work, "Il Principe," consisting of twenty-six chapters, is certainly one of Machiavelli's best efforts. The subject being very circumscribed and well defined, leaves no room for the digressions and repetitions abounding in the "Discourses." We see a ruler arise and become a concrete shape in the author's mind, for the same reasons, according to the same process, and with the same characteristics with which we see him arise and take shape in real life, amid the varied and astonishing political disorder of the Renaissance, to the fore of the mediæval chaos, that forms, as it were, the background of the picture, and slowly but surely recedes to a greater distance. The various methods by which the tyranny, inevitable in the Renaissance, rids society of mediæval influences, and lays the foundations of the modern State, are precisely those which, according to Machiavelli, the prince *is bound* to adopt. And owing to the great resemblance between the author's creation and actual realities, the personage that he describes to us—detestable as he may seem to modern ideas—acquires a species of tragic truth overwhelming us at the same time with terror and amazement.

The reason why the book has all the importance of a great historical event, is because Machiavelli's idea and the new state of society simultaneously springing into existence around him, seem two aspects of the same revolution, occurring almost under our own eyes. The writer has an immediate and practical end in view; but it is neither a government office, nor the favour of the Medici. In no literature has any personal appeal ever proved to

[1] See in the Appendix of the Italian edition the already quoted letters of Vettori.

[2] Letter of dedication prefixed to the "Prince," "Opere," vol. iv

being able to change his nature, and my poverty bears witness to my good faith and honesty." [1]

Accordingly, as soon as the book was finished, Machiavelli thought of dedicating it to Giuliano, but he hesitated a great deal as to the expediency and opportunity of doing so; he also doubted whether the Medici would read it, and asked Vettori's advice upon the subject. And he hesitated so long that Giuliano died (1516) before the book had been presented, and the dedicatory epistle written for him was afterwards addressed to Lorenzo; but we are left in ignorance as to whether he ever saw or accepted it. Regarding Vettori's opinion, we only learn from his unpublished letters that he read a few chapters of the work, and that these pleased him beyond measure.[2] He waited, however, to read the rest before pronouncing his final judgment, or advising on the expediency of dedicating and presenting it to Giuliano. But neither verdict nor advice was ever forthcoming, although Vettori was fully informed of everything by Casavecchia, who was in Rome precisely at that time, and had read the "Prince" in Florence. To Machiavelli's noble, elevated, and eloquent words, the ambassador only replied by a recital of his licentious love intrigues, and without adding a single word of encouragement. His silence and reserve clearly show that he was not at all persuaded of the advisability and expediency of the dedication, and still less of its usefulness to Machiavelli. It certainly might not suit the Medici to accept the book, especially if they really intended to carry out the counsels contained in it. Therefore Vettori confined himself to vague phrases, told Machiavelli that he could very well come to amuse himself in Rome, and he need not refrain from motives of delicacy towards the Soderini. No one would blame him for paying them a visit, which visit, however, was by no means obligatory, since he had held the post of secretary for three years before Piero's election as Gonfalonier for life, and had always faithfully performed his duty without any recompense beyond his usual salary. "Having spoken with Casavecchia, we both came to the conclusion that there was nothing to be done for you in Rome. It is said that Cardinal dei Medici is going to France, in which case I will speak to him of you, as you are acquainted with the country through having been there." He then went on to write of other matters, other vague hopes, without saying anything definite, and without ever affecting to

[1] Letter of the 10th of December, 1513, previously quoted.

[2] Letter of Vettori, dated 18th of January, 1514. See, too, the preceding letter, dated 24th of December, 1513. Both are given in the Appendix of the Italian edition, document xvii.

exhortation to the tyrant transformed into the princely deliverer, is the most eloquent address to be found in Italian literature.

Machiavelli starts with the declaration that having spoken of republics elsewhere, he now proposes to treat solely of principalities,[1] which he divides into two categories: the hereditary and the new. These he then proceeds to subdivide into entirely new principalities, and those only new in part. In the former the prince founds an absolutely new State, or takes renewed possession of it; in the latter, on the contrary, designated as mixed principalities, a new province is annexed to an old State. These latter were very numerous during the Renaissance, because great kingdoms were formed and aggrandized by conquest. The next point considered is that of new States in general. These, indeed, form the chief theme of the book, of which they had suggested the primary idea; besides, as presenting far greater difficulties than hereditary States, greater study is required to gain knowledge of them, greater ability for their good government. "Conquest, in fact, gives offence to many; and those who are benefited by it, expect more than can be conferred by the change."

"When, however," Machiavelli continues, "the newly acquired province is very similar to that to which it is annexed, fewer difficulties stand in the way; and in order to overcome these, it is enough to preserve old customs and shed the blood of the former prince. But when everything in it is different, then there are great and manifold difficulties. In such case it is necessary either for the prince to fix his personal residence in the State, or to plant colonies of new inhabitants in its principal places, the which, although harmful to those despoiled of houses and lands, at least renders them powerless to offend, and keeps the others quiet for fear of incurring a similar fate. And it is a general rule that men should be either killed or caressed, because they can take revenge for slight injuries, but cannot for grave, wherefore the injury should be so grave as to be beyond all risk of reprisals. Then, too, it is expedient to try to conciliate weakly neighbours, since these quickly adhere to the new State, if it be strong; but it is requisite to keep down powerful neighbours, and neither assist nor give entrance into your house to powerful strangers; you must foresee things from afar and resort to sudden remedies. The Romans never concurred with the maxim of our princes, namely, that of *enjoying the benefits of time;* but, on the contrary, preferred to enjoy the benefits of their own virtues and prudence, for time drives all things forward, and runs away with good as

[1] "Il Principe," chap ii p. 2.

be a work of art or a creation of science. The prince described to us by Machiavelli is essentially Italian, but nevertheless has the general character of the great sovereigns of the Renaissance, and personifies therefore the transformation of mediæval Italy into a new and modern State. He is a tyrant, and it is essential for him to be a tyrant, if really determined to succeed in his purpose of uniting, arming, and liberating his country. If capable of imitating the legislators in whose image he should be made, after having armed his people and expelled the foreigners, he will proceed to establish good laws, and will provide for the duration and security of his work by entrusting its defence to the people That in the corrupt Italy of those days all this was a mere dream is beyond doubt; but it was the dream of Machiavelli's entire life, and later we shall find him trying to convert even the Pope to it. So great was the power of the Medici in those days, so wonderful their prosperity! If they would only understand what immortal honour might be theirs, while retaining their power to the hour of their death, was it not possible that the very magnitude of the enterprise might fascinate their intellect and subdue their will? This was Machiavelli's continual hope, it was to this that he tried to urge them, this that induced him to say: "I would they employed me, were it only to roll stones, for if I could not then win them over, it would be my fault, and not fortune's." He desired, he implored an office, but he intended to use it for the triumph of his ideas. And on many other occasions we shall find him labouring to this end.

In writing the "Prince" Machiavelli was so entirely dominated by the modern and national character of his subject, that, contrary to his usual custom, he derived nearly all his examples from contemporary history. Ferdinand the Catholic, Louis XII., Francesco Sforza, Alexander and Cæsar Borgia, then well-known and almost familiar figures in Italy, were the types he interrogated and which furnished him replies. Also, whenever, from inveterate habit, he chanced to refer to antiquity, he felt obliged as it were to allege some excuse: "I did not wish to depart from Italian and recent examples; yet I cannot avoid mention of Hieron of Syracuse."[1] And he goes on from chapter to chapter with logical exactitude, and with rapid, terse, eloquent, and most lucid diction. Every page is resplendent with beauty of style, and the whole sometimes appears to be a work of art, with an almost dramatic power carrying us on to the concluding chapter, where, instead of the catastrophe of the lugubrious drama, we find the apotheosis of the new Italy, the redeemed and united country. The celebrated final

[1] "Il Principe," chap xiii. p 50.

And hereupon we are naturally bidden to remark the tragical figure of Cæsar Borgia, who gained his State by means of his father, and lost it with him. "But he had no sooner gained it, than, in order to establish it upon a solid basis, he did everything that was to be done by a prudent and virtuous man; wherefore no better precepts can be offered to a new prince, than those suggested by the example of his actions. For if, nevertheless, these measures failed to profit him in the end, that was by no fault of his, but owing to an extraordinary and extreme malignity of fortune. Alexander VI. could not safely begin to build up a State for his son elsewhere than in Romagna, where Faenza and Rimini were under the protection of the Venetians, who, therefore, opposed resistance. He was accordingly compelled to take advantage of the French descent that he had promoted. But no sooner had the Duke of Valentinois in this fashion made himself master of Romagna, than he perceived that, if wishful to proceed further, the forces he had in hand might fail him at any moment. In fact, when he desired to assault Bologna, he found the King adverse, and the Orsini, although his allies, very cold in the matter; and when, after seizing the Duchy of Urbino, he sought to enter Tuscany, the King stopped him outright. Thereupon the Duke decided to begin to form an army of his own, and to win over the followers of the Orsini, while awaiting an opportunity to put them to death; the which opportunity came easily to him, and was turned by him to the best account. For they (the Orsini), by their plot at the Magione, excited Urbino and Romagna to revolt against him; and he first of all reduced his State to submission with the aid of the French, and then, without trusting to any one, had recourse to stratagem. And so well did he know how to conceal his real purpose, that the Orsini made peace with him, and were so simple as to give themselves into his hands at Sinigaglia, where he put them to death. Thus, being at last assured of the captains remaining to him, and of the private forces he had organized, he had laid very good foundations for his future power. He was master of all Romagna, and of the Duchy of Urbino; and had gained the affection of the entire population of those States, who had begun to enjoy their prosperity."

"And since this part of his conduct is worthy of notice, and deserves imitation by others, I will not leave it unmentioned," says Machiavelli. "Romagna was full of plundering and crime of every sort, chiefly by fault of the princes who had ruled over it, and who, being poor, and seeking to lead the life of rich men, had recourse to every kind of theft and dishonesty. And among other things, they made laws, which they afterwards instigated

well as evil. When King Louis XII. came into Italy, he broke all these rules, and committed five blunders: he put petty potentates to death; added strength to a power already greater than the rest, *i.e.*, that of the Pope and Valentinois; introduced a powerful stranger, that is Spain, into Italy; did not come to reside in Italy; and failed to plant colonies there. And therefore, when the Cardinal de Rohan said to me that the Italians did not understand war, I replied to him, that the French did not understand statecraft, or would never have allowed the Church to rise to so great a power.[1] When, however, a free city is conquered, it can then only be held in three ways, nor do these always suffice: you must either demolish it, reside in it, or establish a liberal government in the hands of a few men who will preserve it for you. And in general he who conquers a free city and does not destroy it, may expect to be destroyed by it, since it will always rebel, urged by the great love of liberty that is inextinguishable in free men's minds, whereas he who is a slave readily changes his master."[2]

The sixth chapter leads us to the core of the chief theme of the book, by beginning to treat of the new prince of a new State. "Such States," says Machiavelli, "depend above all upon the merits of the prince; and therefore he is most secure who depends more upon his own merits than upon fortune, although the latter is required as well as the former. Moses, Romulus, Cyrus, and Theseus, owed to fortune the opportunity of displaying what virtue lay in them; but the one would have been useless without the other. In any case, no enterprise is more difficult of management, nor more doubtful of success, than that of making yourself the head and inaugurator of new institutions. First of all it is necessary to ascertain whether these innovators depend upon others' strength or their own; that is to say, whether they must stoop to others, or are able to exert their own power. In the first case things always go badly with them, in the second they almost always succeed; and this is also the reason why armed prophets were ever victorious, whereas those who were unarmed, like Savonarola, met with defeat.[3] As for those who attain to princedom by fortune, they reach it with little difficulty, and as though on wings; but can only maintain it with the utmost difficulty, inasmuch as they remain at the mercy of those that helped them to rise. They may, however, after having obtained the State by good fortune, supply it with the foundation it previously lacked by means of their own virtue; the which is occasionally seen to occur, although not without trouble to the architect and risk to the edifice."

[1] "Il Princi [illegible] [2] [illegible]bid., chap. v. [3] Ibid., chap

freeing himself from the supremacy of France; he therefore sought new adherents, and soon began to show coldness towards the French and vacillation on the arrival of the Spaniards. And he would have succeeded in everything, had not the death of Alexander interrupted his plans. He had not only foreseen the death of the Pope, but even the possibility of a hostile successor, and had prepared everything for his defence, endeavouring to get rid of the lords he had despoiled by killing as many of them as was possible, and foreseeing and providing for all things, in such fashion that the College of Cardinals, already diminished in number, was in great part won over to him, and his State of Romagna might be said to be established and secure. He was also in possession of Perugia and Piombino, was the protector of Pisa, and being no longer obliged to respect the French, could dash into the latter city and seize Lucca and Sienna without the Florentines being able to prevent him. All this would have given him a firm and solid basis, and he was about to succeed in his intent and complete his work the same year in which the Pope died, leaving him with Romagna alone consolidated, all the rest uncertain, hemmed in between two powerful hostile armies, and himself almost at the point of death. Nevertheless so great was his ferocity, courage, and shrewdness, that had he not had those two armies upon him, and been so seriously ill, he would have triumphed over every difficulty. For he told me himself that he had anticipated everything, provided for everything, save for being sick unto death at the moment of the Pope's decease." "Therefore, putting together all these actions of the Duke, I could not blame him; on the contrary, as I have said, it seems good to me to propose him as an example to be imitated by all those who through fortune and the arms of others have attained to supreme command. For with his great mind and lofty ambitions, it was not possible for him to govern otherwise."[1]

And after this, as though Cæsar Borgia were not bad enough, Machiavelli goes on to speak of those who attain the princely office, not by fortune, but merely by infamous means. To this end he gives two examples, sufficient for the imitation of those driven to similar means. And the first example quoted is that to which he so often makes allusion, of the Sicilian Agathocles, who "having by his military excellence become Prætor of Syracuse, and having first sought the friendship of the Carthaginians, then assembled the people and the Senate, and caused all the Senators and popular leaders to be slaughtered by his soldiery. Thus his security was established, and he succeeded in everything by his

[1] "Il Principe," chap. vii.

men to break, in order, when there was much transgression, to be able to impose fines. Those who thus became impoverished carried on similar practices with others less powerful than themselves. Hence continual bloodshed and continual acts of revenge.[1] So it was necessary to establish order and peace in the land Then the Duke sent them, with absolute powers, one Messer Ramiro d'Orco, an extremely cruel and resolute man, who in a very short time brought the country into peace and unity. This done, his exceptional and excessive authority seemed no longer needful, and the cruelty with which Messer Ramiro had abused, and still continued to abuse it, rendered it dangerous. Wherefore the Duke suppressed that office, and instituted in its place an ordinary court of justice, in which every city of Romagna had a judge of its own, under the presidency of a most excellent, wise, and prudent man. And in order to persuade men that the severities inflicted had in no way proceeded from him, but solely from the wicked nature of his minister, he caused the latter to be found one morning hacked in two pieces in the public square of Cesena, with a bloody knife beside him. This ferocious spectacle caused the population mingled satisfaction and amazement. But we will now return to the point whence we started"[2] And thus Machiavelli coolly resumes his principal argument.

Here, however, it is necessary to remark, for the better comprehension of these facts so frequently quoted and repeated by Machiavelli, that the documents published in the last few years afford a much clearer explanation of the motives of his constant admiration for Borgia and Borgia's government in Romagna. We now possess indubitable proof that the Duke's method of administration was really far wiser and more intelligent than was previously believed. He executed many useful measures for the advantage of his poorer subjects in the cities and rural districts. As to the murder of Messer Ramiro, the man had already received many warnings from the Duke, admonishing him not to wantonly oppress the people, and to stop the illicit traffic in provisions carried on by him to the continual injury of the poorer classes And it was only when these repeated warnings were disregarded that the Duke, with summary justice, condemned him to death, proclaiming the event in a letter to the people, also of recent publication, as a piece of welcome news, and an example of remedial justice that had long been desired [3]

"The Duke," continues Machiavelli, "had now to think of

[1] For these particulars, see also the "Discorsi," bk. iii. chap. xxix.
[2] "Il Principe," chap. vii.
[3] G. Alvisi, "Cesare Borgia duca di Romagna." Imola, Galeati, 1878.

Such is the principal scope of all government, according to Machiavelli, who neglects and even forgets to examine the many mixed elements constituting the State and society, such as religion, culture, commerce, and industry. Sometimes it would almost appear as though, in order to bestow exclusive attention on the State and the strength of the State, he endeavoured to separate it from society and the individual, and was prepared to sacrifice both to its prosperity, without altogether perceiving that in this way all things would go to ruin. At any rate arms and politics were his sole and constant thought. Without armed strength and without much political wisdom no State can long be maintained. "In the world, ecclesiastical principalities alone can be acquired by virtue or fortune, and maintained without either the one or the other, inasmuch as these are supported and upheld by old-standing religious institutions. Only ecclesiastical rulers hold States and do not defend them, have subjects and do not govern them, and their States are not snatched from them, and neither do their subjects rebel. Even when the Orsini and the Colonna were overthrown by Alexander VI., although the latter only aimed at founding a principality for Cæsar within the territories of the Church, it followed instead that at last the Church became more powerful than ever in her temporal dominion."[1] Other States, however, may not hope for similar good fortune, and must depend upon prudent government and armed defence.

And now three successive chapters are devoted to the question of the armaments needful to the prince; and for Machiavelli, this was a question of the highest importance, inasmuch as he was accustomed to assert that good armies also imply good laws, and that where the former are lacking neither are the latter to be found. "Armies, then, consist of mercenary, auxiliary, and national forces. The first are always most dangerous, since they give way at the moment of trial, as was clearly proved in Italy, as soon as foreigners came down upon us with armies of their own. Only republics and princes with national armies can be assured of safety. And truly it is only with great difficulty that an armed republic falls beneath the sway of a single citizen, as is shown by the example of the Swiss, who are all fully armed and in the enjoyment of the completest freedom. Rome and Sparta lasted for many centuries, being armed and free. Venice and Florence have reaped nothing but continual hurt and danger from mercenary troops. Our princes and priests being ignorant of warfare, had recourse to these, which at the beginning seemed mightily useful; but the result of their merits has been that Italy has been overrun

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xi.

own deeds. It certainly cannot be said," he observes, "that it is a virtue to murder citizens, betray friends, and be without faith; but if we afterwards consider the courage of Agathocles in affronting and escaping from danger, in enduring and overcoming adversity, we can see no reason for judging him inferior to any most excellent captain. Nevertheless, his atrocious cruelty and inhumanity, together with his innumerable wickednesses, prevent us from ranking him among the most excellent of men; nor can we attribute either to fortune or virtue, that which he accomplished without either the one or the other." The second example is that of Oliverotto da Fermo, who was brought up by his uncle Giovanni Fogliani. "He dedicated himself to arms, and becoming a very skilful commander, determined to seize upon Fermo. He therefore wrote to his uncle that he wished to enter the city with a hundred knights in order to exhibit his splendour, and his uncle gave him an honourable reception, and lodged him in his own palace. Oliverotto, having arranged the plot with his confidants, invited his uncle and all the first men in Fermo to a banquet, and then had them all murdered at the same moment. After which, he rode through the city that was now his own, and would have later become a very formidable man, had not the Duke of Valentinois caused him to be strangled." "It may now be asked," adds Machiavelli, "how it was that Agathocles remained in security after his crimes, when so many other tyrants ended badly? All depends," he replies, "as to whether cruelties are well done or ill. Those may be said to be well done, if it may be permitted thus to speak of evil deeds, which are done suddenly for the sake of establishing a safe position, and not continued afterwards. Ill done are those which are also carried on afterwards. It is requisite from the first to calculate what cruelties are necessary, execute them at one stroke, and then reassure men's minds, otherwise you are forced to be always sword in hand. Injuries which are suddenly inflicted are less felt, and therefore give less offence, while nevertheless producing all the desired effect; benefits, on the contrary, should be conferred gradually, so that they be better relished."[1]

He then goes on to treat of the civil principality, and again repeats, that this must be grounded upon the popular support, without which no government can have a secure foundation; it being most perilous to entrust it to the nobles, who wish to be masters themselves.[2] In all cases, however, the chief strength of States rests with the armies,[3] since it is above all things necessary to have the means of repulsing enemies and repressing subjects.

[1] "Il Principe," chap. viii. [2] Ibid, chap. ix. [3] Ibid., chap. x.

according to circumstances." "It would certainly be most praiseworthy for a prince to have every good quality and no bad; but inasmuch as human conditions do not allow of this, it is necessary for him to have enough prudence to avoid all vices which might deprive him of his State, and if possible, even avoid those which would not deprive him of it; but if this be impossible, why then let him yield to them with less precaution." And he insists upon this point and repeats: "Let him be heedless of the risk of infamy for such vices, without which it is hardly possible for him to save his State; for if all things be well considered, something that seems virtue will be found among them, to follow which would entail his ruin, and something that seems vice, to follow which will ensure his safety and prosperity." [1]

Here the reader may be easily led into error, like many before him, if he does not keep in mind that throughout this composition, Machiavelli leaves the personal and private character of the prince almost entirely out of sight; that he only treats of the prince as the representative, the head, the personification of the State. In fact, he makes indiscriminate use of the phrases, *his ruin*, and *the ruin of the State*, for the expression of one and the same idea. His error indeed consists in this, that he too frequently forgets that as this prince is still a man, it is impossible to admit that all personal and private characteristics should be entirely absent from his actions. But here, as in the "Discourses," the author's conception only succeeds in making its way to the light, on the one hand by the most absolute abstraction of political from private morality, and on the other by rendering the idea of the State concrete and personified in an imaginary being. In this being, in this, as it were, impersonal person, the private individual is inevitably merged in the politician. Yet that which Machiavelli says of the one is easily attributed to the other; and when he speaks of the abstract personage, the reader always sees before him the real and concrete man. Hence continual confusion and misapprehension.

What, then, at least are the qualities which, according to Machiavelli, the prince should possess? The liberality so much insisted upon by the learned, especially with regard to men of letters, is not praiseworthy in him, since he spends not his own money, but that of others, and hence Machiavelli prefers that he should be parsimonious; only of the spoils of war has the prince the right to be lavish [2] Is it better for him to be cruel or clement, loved or feared? "In general terms, it is certainly far better to be considered merciful; nevertheless mercy must not be badly em-

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xv. [2] Ibid., chap. xvi.

by Charles, ravaged by Louis, coerced by Ferrando, insulted by the Swiss. Among us mercenary troops have destroyed the infantry, which is always the backbone of an army. And this came about, because a few foot soldiers do not suffice, and many cost too much; while on the contrary a free company is quickly formed with a moderate number of men-at-arms.[1] The troops of allies are still more dangerous, since they leave you at the mercy of him who comes to your aid, and always either fall away from you, or oppress, or constrain you." Then, recurring to his favourite example, he goes on to say: "I cannot doubt the fittingness of citing Cæsar Borgia and his deeds. He began with the aid of French auxiliary troops; but perceiving his danger, had recourse to mercenaries who at least were paid by and dependent upon him, and then, recognizing how little security these afforded him, relied upon forces of his own. The difference between these and those was speedily seen by the reputation he acquired as soon as he leant solely upon his own soldiers and resources.[2] Therefore, the formation of a national militia should be the continual thought of the prince; he should devote his whole mind to it, and even in reading history should meditate upon the deeds of great captains, in order to imitate them." [3]

Machiavelli, at this point, starts a still graver question. Intending to speak in general of that which may bring praise or blame to a prince, he says that he must now prepare to speak of matters already treated by many preceding writers. Here he alludes less to writers of antiquity than to those of the Middle Ages, such as Egidio Colonna and Dante Alighieri; and to the scholars of the sixteenth century such as Panormita, Poggio, Pontano and many others, who had maintained that the sovereign should be possessed of every virtue, and should be an ideal pattern of religion and modesty, of justice and generosity. But Machiavelli wisely observes that, when desirous of rendering a real service to those who can understand him, it is far more expedient "to seek the practical truth of the thing, rather than its mere semblance. And many have imagined republics and principalities such as have never been seen nor known to exist, for there is so much difference between how we live and how we ought to live, that he who leaves that which is done for that which ought to be done, studies his ruin rather than his safety; because a man who should profess to be honest in all his dealings, would necessarily come to ruin among so many that are dishonest. Whence it behoves every prince, desirous of maintaining his power, to learn how to be dishonest, and to make use or not of this knowledge

[1] "Il Principe." chap xii. [2] Ibid., chap. xiii. [3] Ibid, chap. xiv.

beast and the man, as indeed the ancients tried to signify by the fable of Achilles educated by Chiron the centaur. A prince, then, should know how to assume the beast nature of both the fox and the lion, for the lion cannot defend himself against snares, nor the fox against wolves. . . . Those that merely play the lion do not understand the matter. Therefore a prudent lord neither could nor should observe faith, when such observance might be to his injury, and when the motives that caused him to promise it are at an end. Were all men good this precept would not be good; but since men are bad and would not keep faith with you, you are not bound to keep faith with them." "It is necessary," he again repeats, "to give a good colouring to your nature, and be a great dissembler and dissimulator, because men then readily allow themselves to be deceived. Alexander VI. did nothing but deceive, and thought of nothing else during the whole of his life, nor did any other man ever vow with stronger oaths to observe promises which he afterwards broke; nevertheless, he succeeded in everything, for he was well acquainted with this part of the world."

Nor is this all. It is not necessary for a prince to have the good qualities of which we have treated above; but it is highly necessary that he should seem to have them. "Indeed, I will dare to say that it is to his injury to possess, and always to act upon them, while it is useful for him to appear to possess them; as, for instance, to seem pitiful, faithful, humane, religious, thorough, and to be all these; but it is well to have your mind so trained that when it is expedient not to have these qualities you may know how to become entirely different." And it should also be understood that a prince, particularly a new prince, cannot practise all the virtues constituting the goodness of other men, being often "obliged, for the maintenance of his State, to act against faith, against charity, against humanity, and against religion. It therefore behoves him to have a mind disposed to change, according to the winds, and as the vicissitudes of fortune may ordain; and as I said before he should, if possible, practise goodness, but under the pressure of necessity should know how to pursue evil. Accordingly, a prince should be very careful to let nothing escape his lips that is not pregnant with the five qualities above described, so that in his aspect as in his words he may seem all piety, faith, humanity, integrity, and religion. And nothing is more necessary than to appear to possess this latter quality, religion, inasmuch as the mass of mankind judge rather by sight than touch, for all can see, while few can feel. Every one sees that which you seem to be, few feel that which you are, and those few do not dare to oppose the voice of the majority having the majesty of the State at their

ployed. Cæsar Borgia was esteemed a cruel man; nevertheless that cruelty of his had set Romagna to rights, united it and brought it to a state of peace and good faith. And, in fact, he was more merciful than the Florentines, who, in order to avoid cruelty, allowed Pistoia to be destroyed by factions. It would be better, were it possible, to be loved and feared at the same time; but as that is not possible, it is better to be feared, when you have to choose the alternative. Love is maintained by a bond of obligation, which, owing to the wickedness of human nature, is always broken whenever it clashes with private interest; but fear is maintained by a dread of punishment that never abandons you. Men love at their own pleasure, but fear at the pleasure of the prince, who should therefore depend upon that which is his own, not upon that which is of others. Yet he may be feared without being hated, if he refrain from touching the property and womankind of his subjects, and if he avoid bloodshed excepting when there is good cause and manifest justification for it; inasmuch as men more easily forget the loss of their father than of their property. Besides which, when you begin to live by other's property there is no end to it, whereas occasions for bloodshed may seldom arise."[1]

And now follows the celebrated chapter, the butt of so much abuse, on the question of keeping faith or breaking it. That it is right to keep faith, says Machiavelli, is understood by all; "nevertheless experience has proved in our own times that the princes who have achieved great deeds are those who have held good faith of small account, and have known how to bewilder men's brains by cunning, and in the end have succeeded better than those whose actions have been ruled by honour."[2] "There are two modes of fighting, one by law, the other by force; the first is proper to man, the second to brute beasts; and as the first is not always efficacious, so it is frequently necessary to recur to the second. Therefore a prince should know how to play both the

[1] "Il Principe," chap xvii.

[2] Madame de Rémusat, in speaking of Napoleon I. in her "Mémoires," tells us that: "Toujours il se défiait des apparences d'un bon sentiment; il ne faisait nul cas de la sincérité, et n'a pas craint de dire qu'il réconnaissait la supériorité d'un homme au plus on moins d'habilité avec laquelle il savait manier le mensonge; et à cette occasion il se plaisait à rappeler que l'un de ses oncles, dès son enfance, avait prédit qu'il gouvernerait le monde, parce qu'il avait coutume de toujours mentir. M. de Metternich disait-il encore, est tout près d être un homme d'État, il ment très bien" ("Mémoires," Paris, C. Lévy, 1880, vol. i. p. 105). And further on the lady quotes these other words of Napoleon I.: "Tenez, au fond, il n'y a rien de noble ni de bas dans ce monde; j'ai dans mon caractère tout ce qui peut contribuer à affermir le pouvoir, et à tromper ceux qui prétendent me connaître" (Ibidem, vol i p. 108).

adds, that the action of the statesman is efficacious, not according to its real, but according to its apparent intention, which is of much value in politics, and often indeed a genuine reality. To be good and sincere without succeeding in being recognized as such, is useless in politics, whereas to be merely thought sincere and good may be fruitful of real and advantageous results to the State and its ruler. Thus a prince, who without belief in the religion of his people, nevertheless shows it respect, or in certain cases even allows the populace to think he has faith in it, may be acting more wisely than he who feigns to despise religion, while really believing in it. No one condemned Napoleon I. for the respect paid by him in Egypt towards the Mussulman creed; no one condemns the English for showing deference to the faith of the Hindoos. This by no means implies that religion is only to be regarded as an engine of government, an opinion that Machiavelli has so often been unjustly accused of entertaining. Undoubtedly religion is an engine of government in the hands of the statesman; and this signifies that he is bound to hold it in much respect, and recognize it as a force to be turned to account. But this implies no expression of opinion on the intrinsic value of religion in itself. The Statesman's belief or non-belief in it is a question for his private conscience alone, and one therefore upon which Machiavelli felt by no means obliged to dwell. Indeed, it may truly be asserted that he never expressed any contempt for religion in general, and on the contrary, frequently declared that a religious people is needed for the establishment of liberty, as he also frequently repeated that Italy had become corrupt from lack of religious feeling.

In chapter xix. Machiavelli sums up all that he has said concerning the prince's obligation of not making himself hated, and again refers to the qualities which it is expedient for him to possess. He must never deprive his citizens of their property, never insult their women; he should always preserve a reputation for gravity and courage. There are two things more dangerous to him than anything else: attack from without by external enemies, and attack from within by conspiracy; and upon this last point the author alludes briefly to what we have already read in the "Discourses," but without quoting that work, of which the chapter on conspiracies was still unwritten. And then, recurring to one of his favourite maxims, Machiavelli goes on to say that a prince should not exasperate the nobility, but should, however, always favour the people, unless he wishes to be certain of coming to ruin. But, as the history of the Roman Emperors, many of whom were entirely dependent upon their armies, might be

back. . . . Let the prince then determine to conquer and maintain his State ; the means employed by him will always be deemed honourable, and universally praised, for the popular mind is always caught by appearances and by the final result of things. . . . A certain prince of these days, whom it is as well not to name, never preaches anything but peace and faith, while yet most adverse to both, and had he observed either the one or the other, would have frequently lost either his reputation or his State." [1]

Shocking and detestable as all this may appear, it is nothing but the confirmation of certain keenly observed truths, although expounded in a paradoxical shape giving them the aspect of guilty blunders. In point of fact, Machiavelli merely repeats the axiom that the politician and the diplomat cannot always speak the truth ; that in certain cases they may, and indeed are bound to carefully hide the truth, and compelled to blind those with whom they are in contact, unless they wish to expose themselves, their party, and sometimes the State itself, to serious risk. Now, this is a point that might be discussed to any extent ; but so long as society and politics remain as they were then and still are, it must be acknowledged that this is how the matter unfortunately stands The politician is not an individual addressing another individual , he is the representative of a State, of a party ; he is almost a collective being, whose words have a very different value, aim, and effect, from the value, aim, and effect of the utterances of a private person. Sometimes, indeed, even when anxious to speak the truth, it may be absolutely impossible for him to do so. Not only may declaration of the truth have disastrous effects, but its unreserved and naked avowal to the public, often causes the statesman to be interpreted in an opposite sense to that expressed by his words. For the public also is a collective being, understanding things in a way very different from that in which they would be interpreted by a single individual, and requiring guidance of quite another kind. Of course there is a loyal and a disloyal policy, and there is an honest and a dishonest ; but that was a question Machiavelli could not yet take into consideration, having first to determine the nature of the art of politics, the chosen theme upon which he chiefly dwelt. In pursuing this road, he again comes to the conclusion that the supreme duty of the prince is to constantly uphold the State, and that all means are justified which are really necessary to that end, the which precept we have already examined. For the better definition of his idea, Machiavelli then

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xviii. Here the author would seem to allude to Ferdinand the Catholic, judged both in Italy and elsewhere to be a past-master in deceit.

yet he always shows how little trust he puts in them, whether for the purpose of reducing either old or new subjects to submission, and always reiterates, that in the first case it is necessary to confide in the affection of the people, and in the second, on your own strength, and by seeking continual opportunities of displaying it in venturous enterprises. "Such was the course pursued by Ferdinand the Catholic, who first trained his army, then besieged Granada and drove out the Moors, and finally attacked Africa, France, and Italy. And it should be remembered that in these cases it is requisite to frankly avow yourself either a friend or an enemy; nor must you try to follow neutral courses, for none such exists, and real prudence always lies in choosing the less bad as best."[1]

Hereupon Machiavelli, for the first and only time, pauses to give a little consideration to other elements of human society than war or politics. The prince, he says, should encourage his citizens to quietly devote themselves to their own occupations and business, to trade, agriculture, and every other concern, "so that one man may not abstain from improving his property from fear lest it should be taken from him, nor another from starting a trade for fear of fines; and he (the prince) should hold out rewards to those willing to undertake such things, and to all who plan anything for the amplification of his city or his State. . . . Besides these matters he should, at convenient epochs of the year, keep the people "engaged with festivities and shows."[2] In this way Machiavelli places industry, commerce, and festivities almost upon the same footing, regarding all alike as means of government. Nor does he say anything more about social progress and the necessity of promoting it; so that these scanty words only serve as an additional evidence of the frequently noted fact that he was solely concerned with politics; "saw nothing but the State, the arts by which it was to be maintained, the armaments by which it was to be defended, and that he sacrificed everything to this end."[3]

In fact, in the following chapter he immediately proceeds to speak of the choice of a secretary.

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xxi. [2] Ibid., chap. xxi.

[3] All efforts to prove the contrary have invariably failed, since they were too plainly contradicted by facts. Herr Karl Knies brought out a careful work, entitled: "Niccolò Machiavelli als volkswirthschaftlicher Schriftsteller," in the "Zeitschrift für die gesammte Staatswissenschaft." Achter Jahrgang, zweites und drittes Heft (Tubingen, 1852). In this he endeavours to prove that Machiavelli had original ideas even upon political economy; but he only succeeds in extracting from that writer's works a series of phrases and remarks bearing more or less directly upon economical phenomena, and that are as easily to be found in many

thought by some to contradict this axiom, Machiavelli pauses to speak of these Emperors, in order to indicate the diversity between their condition and that of modern princes. The conclusion he arrives at is this: "that whereas those Emperors depended on their soldiery, contemporary princes, with the exception of the Sultan, depend on the people, and therefore it is enough for these to avoid enraging the nobility, provided they keep the people satisfied, and in fact, this happens in well regulated kingdoms, among which France may certainly be included" "For in that country there is an infinite number of good institutions, upon which the liberty and safety of the king depend; and the foremost of these institutions is the Parliament and its authority; for he who established that kingdom, knew the ambition and insolence of the nobles, and judged it necessary for them to have a curb in their mouth for their due restraint; but on the other hand, knowing the hatred of the masses towards the nobles to be founded upon fear, and wishing to reassure the masses, he would not allow this (institution of parliament) to be the special care of the king, in order to avoid his being accused by the nobles of favouring the people, or accused by the people of favouring the nobles; and therefore he erected a third power, which, without any mission from the throne, should combat the nobles and favour the lower classes. Nor could there be any better and more prudent institution, nor one better fitted to ensure the safety of the king and the kingdom. . . . I once more come to the conclusion that a prince should respect the nobles, but should not make himself hated by the people."[1] And this is the reason why those are much mistaken who, unaware that the modern principality is founded upon the people, refuse to arm their own subjects lest they should become their enemies, and do not comprehend that national armies are the only defence upon which certain reliance can be placed.

"When, however, a new province is acquired as an appendix, as it were, to the original State, it must be ruled by the subjects of the latter, and the new subjects must, if necessary, be reduced to impotence And in similar cases it is of great service to the prince to perform some enterprise, affording him an opportunity of displaying his strength, and should no such occasion arise, to stir up some enemy to bring it about. Mistaken, too, was the old system of the Florentines, in trying to hold Pisa by fortresses, and Pistoia by factions. The latter system had also fatal results for the Venetians." And as to fortresses, although Machiavelli does not condemn their use so absolutely at this point as elsewhere,

[1] "Il Principe," chap xix.

never receive consistent counsels, nor be able to knead them into consistency." [1]

The above precepts, if observed, will give a new prince the semblance of an old one, and that in a very short time, since his actions are far more noticed, "and when recognized as virtuous, far more efficacious in gaining and holding men than those of a prince of old blood. . . . And thus he (the new prince) will possess the twofold glory of having founded a new principality, and beautified and strengthened it with good laws, good armies, good friends, and good examples; even as he will gain twofold ignominy, if, being born a prince, he has lost all by lack of prudence" "For if we now consider these Italian princes who have lost their States in our own times, we shall see that they all lacked armies of their own; and also that certain of them knew not how to conciliate the people, and certain others failed to conciliate the nobles, since States are not lost save by errors such as these. And therefore princes must lay the blame on themselves and not on others.[2] It is true that many believe the affairs of this world to be so ruled by fortune and by God, that men can do nothing in the matter; and it might therefore seem useless to think too much about it and better to let yourself be ruled by fate. This opinion is much diffused in our days, owing to the great changes occurring in Italy, beyond all range of human conjecture." "Nevertheless, since our free will is not extinguished, I deem it may be true that fortune is the arbiter of one-half of our actions, but that the guidance of the other half, or somewhat less than half, is still left to ourselves. And I would compare fortune to one of those destructive rivers, which when in fury flood the plains, overthrow trees and buildings, tear away soil from one place and carry it to another; every one flies before these rivers, every one is swept down by them without any possibility of resistance; and yet, mighty as they be, there is no reason why men should not erect defences against them in fair weather, by means of banks and dykes; so that when the waters rose they might either be diverted into canals, or their rage held in check and rendered less harmful. It is the same with fortune, who asserts her power whenever no virtue be organized to withstand her, and turns her fury wherever there be neither dams nor dykes to keep it within bounds. And if you consider Italy, which is the seat of all these changes, and first set them in motion, you will see that it is an open country without embankments or other defences. For were it fortified by suitable virtues, even as Germany, Spain, or France, this flood would either have caused fewer

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xxiii. [2] Ibid., chap. xxiv.

This choice serves as a test of the prince's sagacity. There are some men who can understand things by the light of their own intelligence, and therefore succeed excellently well, and without needing any one to help them; others again can neither understand things of themselves, nor even with the aid and explanations of others, and these prove utterly incapable. But there are many who, without being able to comprehend things by themselves, can understand and profit by others' advice, and to such men a secretary is of the greatest service, as was Antonio da Venafro to Pandolfo Petrucci, who, thanks to the good choice he had made, and the aid he derived from it, was esteemed a man of excellent parts. The worth of the secretary is known by seeing him think of his prince's advantage and not his own, for he that has the management of another's State should never think of himself, but always of his prince, who on his side is bound to think of his secretary, enriching him, and loading him with honours, so that he may have nothing left to desire.[1] It is, however, always necessary to avoid flatterers, who are the scourges of courts. The prince must not permit all men to say whatever they choose, and neither must he allow himself to be flattered; but must select a few wise and prudent men, who may freely speak the truth to him touching all matters upon which he interrogates them. Then let him deliberate by himself and remain firm to his decision. Nor let it be said that in this way he would seem to have no sagacity of his own and to wish to derive it from others, "for it is a general and infallible rule, that no prince without wisdom of his own can be wisely counselled by others, unless indeed it happened that he trusted altogether to one who entirely governed him and chanced to be a man of consummate prudence." "In such case he might certainly be well guided, but would be at the mercy of others, and speedily fall into straits. By asking advice from more than one, he can choose and arrange matters; but then he must be wise and capable of choice, otherwise he will

other historians and politicians of the time. In the chronicles of the "Trecento," and particularly in those of Villani, there are many and more valuable remarks to the same effect. And in praising this work, Mohl very justly observes, that it is a better proof of the acumen and diligence of Herr Knies, than of the economic value of Machiavelli's writings. "Mit grossem Fleisse sind die ganz gelegentlichen und zerstreuten Spruche Machiavelli's uber wirthschaftliche Beziehungen zusammengestellt; das Hauptergebniss dürfte aber doch wohl mehr ein Beweis von dem Scharfsinne des Bearbeiters, als ein Nachweis von irgend bemerkenswerthen Kenntnissen und Gedanken des Florentiners uber die Wirthschaft den Volker und Staaten sein. Sagt er doch selbst in einem seiner Briefe, dass er uber die Verarbeitung von Seide und Wolle, uber Gewinn und Verlust nicht zu reden wisse" (Mohl, *op. cit.*, p. 532, in the notes).

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xxii.

she may better place her trust than in your illustrious House, which, thanks to its virtues and fortune, and its favour in sight of God and the Church, of whom it is now the supreme ruler, might well take the lead in this work of redemption." "There is much justice here and great willingness in men's minds ; prodigious signs have been seen portending mighty changes ; all is in favour of your greatness ; the rest must be accomplished by you, for God has no desire to deprive us of our free will."

Nor need you lose heart because of the example of those who have failed in the same enterprise, for if you will establish the new military organization, you will see that the necessary materials may speedily be found. There is plenty of virtue here in individuals, when leaders are at hand ; and we see that in duels and conflicts between small numbers, Italians always gain the victory by their strength, their skill, and their cleverness. You must arm your own people and depend upon a national infantry capable of being trained to excellence. Although the Swiss and Spanish troops are esteemed terrible, they are not without defects, and a third order of infantry in Italy might surpass them. The Spaniards cannot withstand cavalry, and the Swiss ought to fear foot soldiers, on finding them no less sturdy than themselves in the field ; wherefore a new infantry might be trained capable of resisting cavalry and fearless against unmounted men, the which could be contrived, not by new styles of weapons, but by different organization. And these are the things bringing fame and greatness to a new prince." "This occasion then must not be let slip, for thus Italy may at last behold her deliverer. Nor have I words to express the affection with which he would be welcomed in all these provinces which have suffered so much from foreign invasions, nor to express the thirst for revenge, the obstinate faith, the devotion and tears ! What gates would be closed before him ? what population deny him obedience ? what intrigues would be opposed to him ? what Italian refuse him respect ? This barbarous domination stinks in all men's nostrils. Let, then, your illustrious House undertake this task, with the courage and confidence with which just deeds are undertaken ; so that under the banner of your House this country may rise to nobility, and under its auspices this saying of Petrarch be verified :

> "Virtù contro al furore
> Prenderà l'arme e fia il combatter corto :
> Chè l'antico valore
> Negl' Italici cor non è ancor morto." [1]

[1] Roughly rendered : "When Virtue takes arms against Fury, short will be the fight, for in Italian hearts still lives the ancient might."

changes, or not have come upon us at all." And the great vicissitudes in the fortunes of princes are caused, as Machiavelli had frequently asserted and now repeats, by lack of harmony between their qualities and the nature of the times; for times alter, while men cannot change their own nature; whence it happens that those who were fortunate at one time, are either ruined all of a sudden, or things cease to come about according to their desires. And this easily explains how, "since fortune varies, and men remain obstinate in their own conceit, they are happy while in agreement with fortune and unhappy when at odds with it. I hold, therefore, that it is better to be impetuous than cautious; for fortune is a woman, and in order to keep her in subjection, it is necessary to beat her and flout her; and we see that she is more readily conquered by those acting in this wise, than by those who woo her coolly. Then, too, ever like a woman, she is friendly to the young, for these are less cautious, more furious, and address her with greater audacity."[1]

We have now come to the final chapter, concluding with the very and justly renowned exhortation to the Medici, comprising the synthesis of the "Prince" and of Machiavelli's ruling political idea. "Considering, therefore, all the things treated of above, and turning over in my mind whether in Italy at this moment the times be of a sort to do honour to a new prince, and whether there be matter affording opportunity to a prudent and virtuous man to introduce new institutions honourable to him and beneficial to the mass of mankind in this country, it appears to me that all things concur to the advantage of a new prince, and that there was never a moment more fitting than the present." And if, in order to test the virtue of a Moses, a Cyrus, and a Theseus, it was requisite for Egypt, Persia, and Athens to be reduced to the miserable conditions that we find described, so, in order to test the virtue of the Italian intellect, "it was requisite for Italy to be reduced to her present state, and to be more captive than the Jews, more enslaved than the Persians, more divided than the Athenians, without a head, without discipline, bruised, bespoiled, lacerated, ravaged, and subjected to every kind of affliction." "And although more than once we have beheld some one affording us a gleam of hope that he had a mission from God to redeem our country, yet he was ever repulsed by fortune, so that Italy still awaits him who is to come to heal her wounds." See how she implores Heaven to send her one to deliver her from this barbarous cruelty and insolence! See, too, how she is all ready and willing to follow a banner, provided any man be found to raise it. Nor at present is there any in whom

[1] "Il Principe," chap. xxv.

of a thinker's brain had all the importance of an historical incident, for Machiavelli had foreseen that which was bound to ensue in Europe, and by his proclamation of it, helped to precipitate the course of events. It is beyond doubt that the "Prince" had a more direct action upon real life than any other book in the world, and a larger share in emancipating Europe from the Middle Ages In the last chapter the personage originally conceived as being outside society and the people, and towering above both, in order by force and violence to endow them with unity and organic shape, is drawn nearer to them, confounded with them, and ends by representing their highest aspirations, personifying their most secret conscience As, in European history, tyranny first helped to mould national unity into shape, and then, by supporting the third estate and the people against the aristocracy, underwent a gradual transformation, finally leading to liberal representative monarchies, so the "Prince" slowly assumes shape and development before us. Machiavelli's dream was so thoroughly inspired by truth, reality. and political necessity, that it became a prophecy of the future, Then, as regards Italy, all that he wrote in his exhortation appears an almost exact description of that which, after an interval of three centuries and a half, we have seen accomplished under our own eyes. Only, therefore, after facts had proved the truth of the dream, was it possible to grasp the whole conception of the Florentine Secretary, and appreciate the prodigious originality of his mind.



Thus ends the slender volume that will ever remain an immortal monument in the history of literature. In the "Discourses" Machiavelli does not always proceed rapidly and directly to his end ; often, indeed, he comes to a pause, turns back and repeats himself. The various elements of his political idea are to be found in the "Discourses," sometimes thrown together without any successful attempt at arrangement or fusion, sometimes even in apparent disagreement. He never attained any genuine and systematic unity, nor was it possible for him to do so, for although he aimed at the foundation of a new science, he had neither the wish nor the power to create a system. The unity of his science is rather to be found in his mode of thought, in his novel conception of society and the State, in his judgment of the conduct of the politician, in the novelty of his method, and in certain continually ruling ideas When Machiavelli is not under the absolute sway of these ideas, he frankly records his own observations on past and present events, and, like Guicciardini, is ever careless whether or no these observations always accord one with another, or with assertions made by him elsewhere. Even the "Prince" cannot be said to have a system ; but at least in that work the author's fundamental ideas are reduced to unity by their personification in the legislator and ruler who is to organize and regenerate the country. This idea, this ideal personage, first inspired in Machiavelli's mind by the examples of antiquity and on the model of Romulus, Lycurgus, and Solon, is also frequently brought before us in the pages of the "Discourses," sometimes singly and in an almost abstract form, while at other times presented in a more concrete and modern shape in association with Francesco Sforza, Cæsar Borgia, and Ferdinand the Catholic. But in the "Prince" we have no longer an abstraction, but a concrete, real and living personage ; the type and image of the sovereigns of the Renaissance. This type seems to deprecate all connection with antiquity while still deriving many direct examples from it, as for instance in the case of Philip of Macedon, when summoned by Isocrates to unite Greece and combat the barbarians.

Machiavelli being dominated, we might almost say overpowered by his idea, endeavoured to force it upon the Medici, whom he tried to convert into the likeness of his personage. All this, as we have already said, was a mere dream, for the Italians were corrupted at that time ; the Medici, incapable of comprehending the nobility of the idea, were equally incapable of soaring to the greatness demanded of them ; and there was not only the Pope, but also the temporal power to be reckoned with, whose roots stretched throughout Italy and into foreign lands. Nevertheless, this creation

down to the present day.[1] For our purpose it is sufficient to notice a few of the commentators and expounders of Machiavelli, in order to define the different channels of criticism and investigate the causes of so many contradictory modes of judging the same author.

During Machiavelli's life neither the "Prince" nor the "Discourses" were printed, but the first work in particular soon obtained a wide circulation in manuscript. One of the two copies we have in Florence made by Buonaccorsi from the original, is accompanied by a letter from the same to Pandolfo Bellacci, in which he says that he is sending him Machiavelli's "recently composed work," in which he will find described "all the merits of principalities, all the modes of preserving them, and all their defects, together with an exact account of ancient and modern history." He then goes on to beg Bellacci "to constitute himself a most sturdy champion against all those who, through malignity or envy, should try, according to the usage of these times, to bite and rend him" (Machiavelli)[2] These words show that no scandal was feared, but only criticism; and they likewise prove that even the mediocre intelligence of Buonaccorsi had instantly grasped, and with sufficient clearness, the meaning, aim, and merit of the volume. We have seen that Vettori hastened to express high praise of the first chapters. Guicciardini, in commenting upon the "Discourses," frequently dwelt upon the maxims repeated in the "Prince," and although he often disagreed from Machiavelli, he was never scandalized by his utterances, never hinted at protests from other quarters. Had any scandal been excited, surely some trace of it would have been found either in the letters of Machiavelli or in those addressed to him! Surely, too, Leo X. would scarcely have sought his advice on questions of general policy and the condition of Florence; nor Clement VII have obtained him the commission to write the

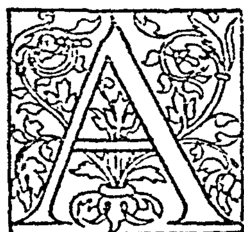
[1] Several notices were collected in Reinhard's "Theatrum prudentia elegantions" (p. 37 and fol), published in 1702, and in the "Bibliotheca politico-heraldica" (pp. 38-68), published in 1706. Much is also to be found (and frequently with full and copious extracts from the authors quoted) in Joh. Frider. Christii, "De Nicolao Machiavello libri tres" (Lipsiae et Halae Magdeb, 1731) and also in the great edition of Machiavelli's works published in Florence, 1782, and in the "Elogio di Niccolò Machiavelli," written by Giovan Battista Baldelli, published in London, 1794. Many writers have borrowed from these authors without acknowledgment. We have already mentioned Mohl's excellent work, "Die Machiavelli Literatur."

[2] This letter has been frequently published, and is to be found in the copy of "Il Principe," preserved in the Laurentian Library in Florence, shelf xliv. cod. 32 This and other ancient copies have been already cited by us.



CHAPTER V.

The critics of the "Prince"—Contemporaries and Florentines after 1530—Defenders of the Church—Jesuits—Charles V. and statesmen—Protestants—Christina of Sweden, Frederick II. of Prussia, Napoleon I., Prince Metternich—Philosophers and critics—Ranke and Leo—Macaulay—Gervinus and more recent critics.



LTHOUGH Machiavelli always expounded his opinions with a lucidity that at times seems almost excessive, yet, throughout the whole history of literature, we find no other writer the subject of so many and different interpretations. To his "Prince" in particular, hidden and mysterious purposes have been attributed; endeavours made to prove that work to be in open contradiction with the "Discourses." And when it came to be demonstrated that no such contradiction existed, then not only were both works simultaneously made the theme of subtle commentary and artificial hypothesis, but a similar fabric was woven about the author's political conduct and character. These interpretations being very numerous, very varied, and often maintained by men of great learning and ability, the result has been that the enigma of Machiavelli himself has been further complicated by that of his interpreters. We have not the slightest wish to compile a lengthy catalogue of the truly amazing number of writers who have expressed different views of the Florentine Secretary. The task would lead us beyond all due limits of space, and has besides been already begun by many others, and admirably carried on by Mohl, whose work, concluded in 1858, only requires to be brought

Its prolonged impunity may be attributed, as this gentleman justly observes, partly to the slight importance attaching to Nifo's works, and partly to the fact that at that time the maxims borrowed from the "Prince" were held in more general acceptation than is usually believed. We would also suggest as another reason the fact of Agostino Nifo having tried by means of his concluding chapters to attenuate the effect possibly produced upon his readers by certain too audacious sentences; and while this attempt proves that he had failed to seize the true meaning of the book, it also proves that some doubt as to that meaning was already, even if vaguely, afloat. Nifo, after borrowing from Machiavelli, doubtless thought that he had remedied everything and almost composed a new work, by following up the theories of the original author by others of his own, leading to totally opposed and *healthier* conclusions.

In 1531 Blado printed the "Discourses" in Rome, and in the following year the "Prince," "cum gratia et privilegio of Clement VII. and other princes." By that time, however, the book had aroused dispute in Florence, for we find that Bernardo di Giunta, on producing another edition of the "Prince" in the same year, dedicated it to Monsignor Gaddi, praying him to defend the book "against all who, on account of its subject, daily attack it so furiously, unaware in their ignorance that those who touch medicine likewise impart a knowledge of poisons, in order that we may learn how to protect ourselves against them."[1] In a short time a rapid and radical change had taken place in the political condition and public opinion of Florence. After the siege, beginning in 1529, the Medici had been forcibly reinstated, no longer as the timid protectors of an ephemeral republic, but as tyrants thirsting for revenge. Persecution had begun, accompanied by sentences of exile and death. Accordingly, although in the days of Lorenzo and Giuliano no one had blamed Machiavelli for his desire to serve the Medici, nor had the "Prince" given rise to suspicion or calumny, now different judgments were formed both of the book

voir que la monnaie courante de l'opinion commune, ou la théorie presque banale des pratiques accoutumées. . . . En définitive Machiavel n'a fait qu' enseigner en maitre ce que Niphus pensait lui même, ce que pensaient à peu-près tous les politiques de l'époque à la quelle l'un et l'autre appartiennent" (Nourrisson, "Machiavel," pp. 230–31). But Nifo added the chapters by which he pretended to complete Machiavelli's work, uniting, as he says, the antidote to the poison. These few chapters form a fifth book, joined to the four in which the philosopher of Sessa had divided his mutilated translation of the "Principe"

[1] Blado's edition, as well as those brought out by Giunta at different periods are described in Gamba's work, and in the pamphlet entitled "Quarto Centenario di Niccolò Machiavelli" (Florence. Successori Le Monnier, 1869).

"Storia," and employed him later, as we are about to see, in offices of considerable importance!

There is also another fact confirming this opinion, and showing that the "Prince" was very well known at that time. A certain Agostino Nifo di Sessa, a philosopher of slight ability, but of much repute in his day, was teaching in Pisa during the college terms of 1521–22, and had taught there for some years. In 1523 this man brought out at Naples a book entitled "De Regnandi Peritia," that was merely a bad imitation, and often a literal Latin rendering, of the "Principe."[1] But, having suppressed the last chapter of the original work, and added a few others of no value on what he was pleased to style "honest modes of government," full of the usual commonplaces on the virtues of a good sovereign, he considered that he had completed and corrected the "Principe." This bad copy he dedicated to Charles V. as his own original work, stating that it contained a brief exposition of the acts of tyrants and monarchs, on the same principle on which medical books treat of poisons and their antidotes. The volume was much applauded by the Neapolitan *literati*,[2] but the plagiarism remained unnoticed to our own day, and was first detected in 1876[3] by Mons. Nourrisson of the French Institute.

[1] Augustini Nifi, Medices, philosophi suessani, "De Regnandi Peritia." The book was completed at Sessa in 1522, dedicated to Charles V., and printed at Naples in 1523, aedibus Catharinae de Sylvestre.

[2] It was published together with a collection of letters and epigrams. One of these states that the book contains:

> "Quid laetos faciat populos urbesque beatas,
> Quid regem similem reddat in orbe Deo."

A letter of Pietro Gravina styles it "aureum quidem et vere regium." And he adds that as Alexander kept the Iliad beside him, "sic tuum hoc opus in anquotissimo Cæsaris nostri pectore perpetuo reponendum putem." To this letter Gravina also adds some Latin verses to the effect that the small and precious volume should become the faithful Achates of kings.

[3] See chapters xii. xiii and xiv. of his work entitled "Machiavel," Paris, Didier, 1875. And Professor Settembrini afterwards called attention to this plagiarism in his "Lezioni di Letteratura Italiana" More recently Professor Francesco Fiorentino has treated of the same subject, arrived at the same conclusion, and added some notice of the life of Nifo in his essay: "Del Principe del Machiavelli e di un libro di Agostino Nifo," in the "Giornale Napoletano di Filosofia e Lettere, scienze morali e politiche," New Series, anno 1, vol. i. No 1. Naples, Morano, 1879 Neither Settembrini nor Fiorentino seem to have been acquainted with the work of Mons Nourrisson. The latter suggests the following explanation of the reasons for which the plagiarism escaped the notice of contemporaries, and of so many after generations "C'est que manifestement à leurs yeux, en dépit de toutes les différences qui séparent Machiavel et Niphus, cette disparate n'existait pas; c'est que manifestement encore, loin qu' il y eût pour eux quoi que soit d'abominablement inouï dans de pareilles doctrines, ils ne devaient y

wealthy thought the 'Principe' a document intended to teach the Duke how to deprive them of their property, the poor, to deprive them of their liberty. The Piagnoni regarded him as a heretic, the good as a scoundrel, the bad as one more depraved and crafty than themselves, so that every one hated him."[1] And Varchi, who had no liking for Machiavelli, repeated the same charges in his history.[2] But Busini's letter was written in 1549, that is to say twenty-two years after Machiavelli's death, and about nineteen after the restoration of the Medici; while Varchi's history was written still later and at the command of Duke Cosimo By that time everything was changed, not only in Florence, but throughout Italy and Europe. The republic was for ever extinguished, the absolute rule of the Medici established, and nearly the whole of Italy crushed under foreign sway. The Reformation had reawakened religious feeling in Germany, and driven the Catholic Church to seek renovation and purification by substantial change of all that had characterized it during the Renaissance. Machiavelli had accused the Church of being the ruin of Italy, the source of the world's corruption; these and other tremendous charges could no longer be perused or received with the same indifference as by Leo X. and Clement VII. The men who were now labouring to reconstitute the authority of the Church and restore her to the supreme direction of the universal conscience and of the political conduct of sovereigns, naturally regarded as a foe to be fought and trampled under foot the man who had spoken of the Church with so much contempt, and tried to abase her before the State by treating religion merely as a means for increasing the strength of the State. And thus it came about that Machiavelli was suddenly, as it were, surrounded by enemies, and exposed to the cross fire of their guns The Florentine exiles could not forgive him for having implored the favour of the Medici and given advice to Lorenzo; the adherents of the new Duke could not pardon his republican sentiments; the Protestants were scandalized by his religious indifferentism and by the terms he had applied to Christianity; and the Catholic Church regarded him as a monster to be crushed.

In fact, his first real assailants were Churchmen. Cardinal Reginald Pole opened the attack in his "Apologia,"[3] by asserting that the works of Machiavelli were written by the hand of the evil

[1] "Lettere di G. B. Busini and Benedetto Varchi," edited by Gaetano Milanesi, Florence, Le Monnier, 1861. Letter IX., dated Rome, January 23, 1549, p 84.

[2] Varchi, "Storie Fiorentine," Florence, 1843, brought out at the expense of the Society for the publication of Nardi and Varchi, vol. i. bk. iv. p. 266 and fol.

[3] Quoted before.

and its author. Why should a republican have sought to serve the family of those who had always been the tyrants of the country? What could have been his object in offering advice to Lorenzo, by nature a cruel and despotic man, on the method of maintaining princely power and tyranny? Thus the old spite and enmity excited by Machiavelli's pungent intellect reawakened in full force. And it is a proof of the substantial change a few years had brought about in the mode of regarding and judging political matters, that even the men who sought to defend him had now recourse to arguments which had occurred to none at an earlier date. It was said that if his book really taught princes how to become tyrants it also taught the people how to put an end to them. It was added that he had only addressed Lorenzo in this fashion, hoping that the prince by following his advice would the sooner precipitate his own overthrow. It was even pretended that Machiavelli had taken this line of defence in reply to accusing or questioning friends.[1] But, during his lifetime, there is neither trace nor record of anything of this kind; and besides it is irrelevant to the intentions he really entertained, and frankly declared in writing the "Prince."

Had due consideration been given to this great and rapid change of public opinion in Florence, less weight would have been ascribed by certain writers to a letter from Busini to Benedetto Varchi. In this the writer, while acknowledging that Machiavelli "loved liberty to an extraordinary degree," added that all hated him on account of the "Prince": "The

[1] Cardinal Reginald Pole, a great adversary of Machiavelli, was one of the first to speak of this in his "Apologia ad Carolum V. Cæsarem, super libro de Unitate," Brixiæ, 1744, tom. i p 152 He says that in the year 1534, that is, hardly seven years after the death of Machiavelli, he heard the excuses alleged by his friends on the subject of his book "Il Principe," and especially regarding his dictum that it was better to govern by fear than love. "Illi responderunt idem quod dicebant ab ipso Machiavello, cum idem illi aliquando opponeretur, fuisse responsum: se non solum quidem judicium suum in illo libro fuisse sequntum, sed illius ad quem scriberet, quem cum sciret tyrranica natura fuisse; ea inseruit quæ non potuerunt tali naturæ non maxime arridere; eadem tamen si exercent, se idem indicare quod reliqui omnes, quicumque de Regis vel Principis viri institutione scripserant et experientia docet, breve eius imperium futurum; id quod maxime exoptabat, cum intus odio flagraret illius principis ad quem scriberet: neque aliud spectasse in eo libro quam, scribendi ad tyrannum en quæ tyranno placent, eum sua sponte ruentem præcipitem si posset dare." Matteo Toscano in his "Peplus Italiæ" (Parisiis, 1578), at p. 52, says: "Sed juvat commemorare quid ipse responderit se eo nomine arguentibus Ideo enim impiis præceptis a se imbutos principes affirmavit, ut qui tum Italiani tyrannice vexabant, sua institutione deteriores redditi, eo celerius scelerum suorum poenas penderent. Fore enim ut cum se penitus vitiis immerissent, otatim meritam numinis iram experirentur." It should be remembered that neither Polo nor Toscano was a contemporary of Machiavelli,

carried on against Machiavelli. To his adversaries he seemed a species of myth representing the opposition of the State to the supremacy of the Church, and was held to be the author of the so-called *State reason* (ragione dei Stato), an expression that he had neither uttered nor written. It was necessary to prove in opposition to him, that whoever, whether prince or private citizen, refused to be guided by the Church and refused submission to her authority, was an enemy to God and the human race. For this end all weapons might fairly be used.

And that such was really the end of these writers is proved clearly enough by their own words. The Jesuit Ribadeneira published various works in defence "of the real and not simulated virtues of princes" directed against Machiavelli. In one of these[1] the author, addressing himself to the hereditary Prince of Spain, who was about to succeed to Philip II., tells him that "the hell fires of politicians and Machiavellians are spreading on all sides and threatening to consume the whole world" He therefore advises the Prince to follow the example of Ferdinand of Castile, who was not satisfied with having heretics condemned to death, but when they were sent to the stake, went in person to aid in kindling the sacrificial pile. "He who doeth not in this," he goes on to say, "rushes to certain destruction. In fact, Henry III. of France, who, instead of regulating his conduct by the law of the Almighty, took the advice of politicians and Machiavellians, was doomed, by the just judgment of God, to die by the hand of a poor, simple, and pious young monk of a wound dealt him with a small knife in his own room."[2] The Oratorian friar, Bozio da Gubbio, attacked Machiavelli by order of Innocent IX., and while making use of far more temperate language, equally gave it to be understood that his final aim also was to re-establish over republics and princedoms the supremacy of the papal rights of Gregorius VII and Boniface VIII.[3] And so the fight went on down to the "Machiavellism Beheaded,"[4] of the Spanish Jesuit Clementi, and the "Essay on the Foolishness of Niccolò Machia-

[1] "De Religione et Virtutibus Principis Christiani adversus Machiavellum," libri ii Madrid, 1597.

[2] This letter, also given by Cristio (chapter xiii), is to be found in the Italian edition of Ribadeneira's work, but was omitted from the Latin version. See, too, the other works by the same author: "De Simulatione Virtutum Fugienda."

[3] The titles of these works are sufficiently eloquent: "De imperio virtutis, sive imperia pendere a veris virtutibus, non a simulatis, lib. ii., adversus Machiavellum" Coloniæ, 1594; "De robore bellico, diuturnis et amplis Catholicorum regnis, bk. i, adversus Machiavellum," Coloniæ, 1594; "De Italæ statu antiquo et novo, lib iv, adversus Machiavellum," Coloniæ, 1595; "De ruinis gentium ac regnorum, adversus impios politicus, lib viii," Coloniæ, 1598.

[4] "Machiavellismo Degollato," published in Alcalà, 1637.

one; that he had aimed at the destroyal of those to whom he offered advice, and that his life must have been no less bad and detestable than his writings. The Bishop of Cosenza, Caterino Politi,[1] and the Portoghese Bishop Osorio,[2] followed up the assault and reiterated the same insults. But the regular war against him was undertaken by the Jesuits, who at that time, labouring with their whole strength towards the subjection of the State to the Church, and thinking all means justifiable that might forward this end, were the declared enemies of the man who had striven for the independence of the State. They began by having him burnt in effigy at Ingolstadt,[3] and in 1559 they induced Paul IV. to place his works in the Index, by a decree confirmed in 1564 by the Council of Trent.[4] Possevino, the promoter of all this, was likewise one of the first and most ferocious of Machiavelli's assailants. He did not deny his talent, but denied that he had any religious and moral feeling, or any true knowledge of the world. Machiavelli's counsels, he said, would lead to the total ruin of all who followed them. The criticism, however, was of a kind to plainly show that Possevino had not even read the "Prince," for, amongst other things, he supposed it to be divided in several books.[5] In short, it was a party war that was then

[1] "De Libris a Christiano Detestandis." Romæ, 1522.

[2] "De Nobilitate Christiana," libri iii. Florentiæ, 1552.

[3] This was the inscription affixed to the effigy: "Quoniam fuit homo vafer ac subdolus, diabolicarum cogitationum faber optimus, cacodæmonis auxiliator." See, among other authorities, Ugo Foscolo's "Prose Letterarie," Florence, Le Monnier, 1850, vol. ii. p 452. Foscolo, too, quotes the names of many of the antagonists and supporters of Machiavelli.

[4] Apostolo Zeno, "Annotazioni al Fontanini," part ii. p. 14; Ginguené, "Histoire Litterarie d'Italie," vol. viii. p 72 (Paris, 1819); Nourrisson, "Machiavel," p 5. Later, in the wish of showing some indulgence, the Commission of the Index Expurgatorius suggested to Giuliano dei Ricci and Niccolò Machiavelli, the grandson of the Florentine Secretary, that they should bring out an expurgated edition of the "Opere," not only expunging everything that might be opposed to the Church, but even the name of the author. They accepted the proposal, and in 1573 presented the work complete But when the cardinals charged with the revisal of the Index refused to be satisfied with the omission of Machiavelli's name and desired that it should be replaced by another, the Secretary's descendants refused to accept the humiliating conditions, and the subject was dropped. See Ginguené, *op cit*, p 75 and fol; Nourrisson, *op. cit.*, p. 7. We have in our possession a volume of Machiavelli's "Storie" (Florence, 1551), corrected by his grandsons, from which the author's name and all expressions hostile to the Roman Church have been expunged. At the end of the volume are the following words in the same handwriting as the erasures and alterations. "This book consists of 194 sheets, the Histories of Niccolò Machiavelli, revised first by Niccolò Machiavelli and Giulia dei Ricci, and secondly by the theologian of the most illustrious Cardinal Alessandrino, by order of his superiors."

[5] Possevinus, A, "De N. Machiavelli, &c, Quibusdam Scriptis." Romæ, 1592. This was afterwards republished by the author in his "Bibliotheca Selecta." It treats of Machiavelli and his adversaries.

of it in his own handwriting. Statesmen devoured Machiavelli with avidity, for they found him the only writer speaking the language of reality, and offering counsels of practical utility for the general conduct of great political questions. All those who, in one way or the other, and whether consciously or unconsciously were labouring for the firm establishment and lasting independence of the new State, perceived that this State was being really built up on the ruins of the Middle Ages, and solely by the efforts of such rulers as Machiavelli had described. And all were forced to acknowledge the magnitude of his genius, for in him alone was to be found the true explanation, and, to a certain degree, the historic justification of the realities amid which they were living. And so it came about that the writer's great qualities; the continual study of his works by statesmen of the highest renown, and their explicitly declared admiration for him; the perfect concordance between his counsels and the deeds of the foremost of these statesmen—ended by converting many to the belief that all that was then going on in the world was the consequence of the doctrines expounded in the "Prince." And this naturally and speedily roused against Machiavelli a series of enemies no less implacable and even more formidable than those who had gone before.

When the power of the throne was assured in Europe, and the unity of the State consolidated, then began the struggle of those desiring to curb the growth of despotism, and preserve within the monarchy both political liberty and freedom of conscience. In the "Discourses" Machiavelli had touched upon the question of political liberty, but had always avoided the far more modern problem of freedom of conscience, while in the "Prince" he had left both these questions aside. Hence, in the eyes of those who, whether sincerely or insincerely, judged him only by the "Prince," he appeared as the supporter of despotism, and was accordingly hated by all who were beginning to cry out for liberty. The next to enter the arena were Huguenot writers engaged in battling for liberty of conscience against the French crown, to whom Machiavelli was additionally odious as a lukewarm Christian, never treating of religion save from the political point of view.

The first of these to come forward was Innocent Gentillet, who, attributing the massacre of St Bartholomew to the doctrines of the "Prince," and writing under the impulse of this feeling, assaulted Machiavelli most pitilessly, and styled him *ce chien impur*. Although his aim was totally different from, and, indeed,

German translation of Machiavelli's Letters, containing some just remarks upon this head, especially at pp. 7 and 8. We shall also quote later the words of Gentillet.

velli,"[1] by the Italian Jesuit Lucchesini, which booksellers persisted in styling "The Foolishness of Father Lucchesini," undoubtedly the most suitable title it could bear.

In the pages of Cristio and Mohl the inquiring reader will also find many notices of other writers of this description. All, however, have the same mode of criticism, are equally blinded by the same party spirit, and equally valueless. All follow the plan of isolating the maxims of Machiavelli from the conditions that gave them birth, treating and judging of political maxims as though they were moral precepts, and thus altering their meaning so that they can no longer be understood. It is certainly quite allowable to discuss and to combat the value of the words of a writer who says that in politics and diplomacy it is sometimes permitted to speak falsely; that in warfare it is praiseworthy to hoodwink your adversary; that in a disorganized State it is lawful to use force, violence, and even deceit to re-establish it in its normal conditions; that it is the duty of a prince, even when he has no belief in it, to respect and uphold the religion of his people. But when, instead of discussing these axioms, the critic charges the writer with having asserted in general terms that it is requisite to lie, to deceive, to be cruel, and to feign belief in a religion that you despise, there is no possibilty of any real discussion, and the critic gains an easy victory over the monster that only exists in his own imagination. Such was the war carried on from many quarters, and against Machiavelli, and to a certain degree successfully carried on, since it caused him to be held by many an enemy of all morality, religion, and justice.

Nevertheless, a curious circumstance marked the course of this easy and successful crusade. The editions and translations of the "Prince" continued to multiply, and the book made great progress in the world. It is known that Charles V. carefully studied it, that his son and his courtiers perused it. It is known that Catherine dei Medici introduced it in France, that Henry III. and Henry IV. had it on their persons when murdered, that Richelieu[2] thought highly of it, and that it was studied at the English court.[3] Sixtus V. made a summary

[1] "Saggio della Sciocchezza di Niccolò Machiavelli," published in Rome, 1697.

[2] At Richelieu's command a vigorous "Apology of Machiavelli" was written by Louis Machon, Archdeacon of Tôul, in Lorraine. But, only appearing after the Cardinal's decease, it remained long unnoticed. It is a systematic defence of the leading maxims of the "Prince" and the "Discourses," and its remarkable fire and eloquence caused some to attribute it to Pascal. Throughout the religious wars, the "Prince" exercised an extraordinary influence in France.

[3] See Reiffenberg, "Particularités inédités, sur Charles V.," in the "Mémoires de l'Academie Royale de Bruxelles," vol. viii. See also Leo's preface to his

which men should do, rather than that which they actually do; clinging to his theories, which he believed to be based upon reason, even when they were not in agreement with history. It was his mission, he thought, to inaugurate a system of politics founded upon Christian morality, to render the sovereign a model of virtue. With these ideas, his opposition to Machiavelli was only natural; and, in fact, he perpetually attacks "this wretched man who has become the fashion among courtiers, and makes open boast of his atheism. All really capable of reasoning upon State affairs must allow that Machiavelli never penetrated the depths of political science, which does not consist in those tricks of tyranny such as he sought out in every corner of Italy. His "Principe" lauds to the skies, and selects as a model ruler, the most rascally son of a priest that the world ever knew, and who, his craft notwithstanding, came to the shameful end due to so great a scoundrel. And such has always been the fate of all princes following his example and obeying the precepts of Machiavelli, whose Republic was founded upon impiety and injustice."[1]

In the same rank with Bodino may be placed Tommaso Campanella, a philosopher of great power, who conspired against the Spanish domination in Calabria, and heroically endured many years of confinement and most prolonged and cruel torture. He, too, cannot mention Machiavelli without virulently attacking him. Campanella was a Dominican friar, an enemy of heretics, and yearning to extirpate them He was the author of that Utopian dream, the "City of the Sun," and of two other flights of fancy, the "Monarchy of Spain" and the "Monarchy of the Messiah," in the first of which he upheld the universal dominion of Spain, and subordinated it in the second to the universal

[1] Bodino wrote his "Repubblica" in French, and afterwards, in 1584, translated it into Latin, with various additions. Both the French edition of 1593 and the Latin edition of 1591 may therefore be consulted He also wrote a work entitled, "Methodus ad facilem historiarum cognitionem"

In the opinion of Lerminier, "De Republica" is "le début de la science politique dans l'Europe moderne, ébauche d'une raison ferme, mais incertaine dans ses voies, qui flotte tour à tour entre les théories *à priori* et la méthode d'observation, entre la République de Platon et la Politique d'Aristote, où l'érudition étouffe souvent la pensée, où l'esprit de l'auteur en voulant monter dans le monde des idées et des systèmes s'abat presque toujours dans son vol impuissant sans méthode, sans lumière; mais cependant témoignage irrécusable de vigueur et de génie, monument du seizième siècle," &c. (Lerminier, "Introduction général à l'histoire du droit," Bruxelles, 1836, p. 29, 30) See also "J. Bodin et son temps, tableau des théories politique et des idées économiques au seizieme siècle, par Henri Boudrillart," Paris, Guillaumin, 1853 This work contains a very minute examination and summary of Bodino's works.

totally opposed to, that of the Jesuits, yet he practically pursued the same line of criticism: that is to say, by reducing Machiavelli's special maxims to maxims of morality in general, he found it easy to charge him with immorality and iniquity. He even denied his talent. His system of politics, he said, would never attain the proposed object. Machiavelli was only acquainted with the small duodecimo Italian States, and hence had no real knowledge of history and the world. *De jugement naturel, ferme et solide, Machiavel n'en avait point.*[1] Yet this very superficial and hackneyed criticism made its mark because it met a new want of the times. It repeated old assertions, but with an opposite aim; inasmuch as it spoke in defence of religious liberty, instead of theocratic despotism. As a weapon in a righteous cause, Gentillet's book was imitated and copied by many writers, and thus both Jesuits and Protestants, upholders of despotism and friends of liberty, attacked Machiavelli with the same arms.

His first adversary of really superior ability was Giovanni Bodino, the famous author of the work "De Republica," in which Machiavelli was the continual butt of invective. Bodino was no Protestant; but while influenced on the one hand by the spirit of the Reformation, on the other he was tied to the Middle Ages; he wavered between the historical, scholastic, and theological methods; between experience, history, and the occult sciences, and by means of the latter sometimes found a pretended explanation of political revolutions. He proposed to accomplish that which Machiavelli had declared useless and puerile—namely, the construction of the State *à priori;* investigation of that

[1] Gentillet, T., "Discours sur les moyens de bien gouverner et maintenir en bonne paix un royaume . . . contre N. Machiavel le Florentin." Lausanne, 1576. The German version of this work, of which the second edition appeared in 1583, was entitled "Anti-Machiavellus," the Latin translation: "Commentariorum de regus et quovis principatu rite ac tranquilli administrando, libri iii. 1576." The diversity of titles has sometimes led to the mistaken belief that these were different works. We quote the following lines from the dedication and preface to the first book of the Latin edition, as specimens of Gentillet's rancour against Machiavelli, and because they partly show the causes of this rancour. "Sathanam ut pestiferum illudinde usque ab Italia virus spargeret instrumentum in Gallus peridoneum nactum fuisse, Reginam Matrem (Catharinam Mediceam) quæ Machiavelli civis sui scripta in tantum honorem et dignitatem adduxerit, ut nemo eo tempore in aula gallica isti Medeæ acceptus esset quin Machiavellum italice, gallice legeret, teneret, edisceret, quin ejus præcepta ut Apollinis oracula in mores et in negotia transferret." And at another place: "Ab excessu Henrici II., regis Galliam peregrinis arbitriis sive placitis ac præceptis Machiavelli regi et agitari cœptam. . . . Neminem in Gallia adeo hospitem esse ut nesciat Machiavelli libros eo tempore a quindecim annis hand minus assidue aulicorum manibus teri suevisse, quam breviarium a sacrificis." See also Christii, "De Nicolao Machiavello," &c., which cites these fragments at p. 33, and gives others of the same sort farther on.

judgment of his scientific system. Does the immoral character of Bacon, of Verulam, entail condemnation of his philosophy? And as regards the question of method, Barthélemy Saint Hilaire is altogether astray; it being but too plain that only the Aristotelian, and not the Platonic, method was destined to succeed in creating the science of politics, which, unless based upon experience and history, remains suspended between heaven and earth. Here, therefore, we find a repetition of old and even more untenable charges, rendering the learned Frenchman no less unjust to Aristotle than to Machiavelli.

But a still worse fate had befallen the latter. So far as we have seen his only supporters had been a few sovereigns or their ministers. Before long even these turned against him. With the advance of the seventeenth century the political conditions of Europe underwent a rapid change, and the position of the sovereign in his own State became radically different from his position during the Renaissance. It was no longer a question of wresting power from a feudalism that was already crushed, nor from petty republics and local governments that were already swept away, for the sovereign's power was no longer tottering and uncertain, but firmly secured to the reigning dynasties. In every State a new people had arisen, and sovereigns felt the need of closer union with their people in order to obtain its co-operation in their wars with fellow potentates, and likewise to derive strength from its prosperity, from its moral, civil, and industrial increment. Thus was prepared the way for the so-called enlightened and reforming princes of the eighteenth century. These princes felt the duty of being the leaders, guides, and representatives of their people, the supporters and promoters of its true interests, and neither could nor would longer recognize the "Prince" as their prototype. This ruler, seemingly confounding the State with his own person, solely concerned with the consolidation of his own power and with the moulding of his people into the shape most pleasing and convenient to himself, was now regarded as a negation of the true and just political system erected for the good of the masses, according to the rules of the new philosophy. Thus, even kings and their ministers were finally driven into the ranks of Machiavelli's foes.

There is a French translation of the "Prince," printed at Amsterdam in 1683, with marginal notes from the hand of Christina, ex-Queen of Sweden. These hitherto unpublished notes cannot fail to be read with the most eager attention. They are written in very Swedish French, by a cultivated and able woman, once at the head of a powerful State and a brave nation;

Church. Accordingly, it is easy to understand Campanella's detestation of Machiavelli, and why he always alluded to him as that most wicked man, inventor of the "State reason" that consists in substituting the interests of the Prince for those of the people, and pursues a policy of egotism instead of relying upon pure justice by which universal and eternal reason is kept in view.[1]

In this way the Machiavelli question had come to be regarded as a case of conscience alike by Protestants and Catholics, by philosophers and theologians. Many felt justified in attacking him, without even the preliminary of reading his works. He was the man of sin, the heretic, the foul dog, the atheist, leading society and all followers to destruction. And although this mode of criticism had no shadow of scientific value, it continued to obtain adherents down to our own day. We may quote one of the last and more recent examples Mons Barthélemy Saint Hilaire, in the preface to his fine translation of the "Politics of Aristotle,"[2] declares himself a partisan of Plato, whose politics were based upon morality, and condemns Aristotle for trying on the contrary to base them on facts and upon history, for which he claimed the dignity of a method. Polybius followed the same track, reaching the point of empiricism, and preparing the ground for Machiavelli, who deserves to be the object of universal opprobium. This writer's chosen models, Alexander VI. and Cæsar Borgia, are monsters, and he unhesitatingly approves of perjury, poisoning, and assassination. *Pour peindre d'un mot toute cette politique, c'est le génie appliqué à la scélératesse.* The learned writer then goes on to commend Machiavelli's style as beyond all praise, and says that if in his works the word *succès* could be replaced by *le bien* there would then be much to learn from them concerning public affairs. He concludes by saying, "In short, the historic method that in Aristotle's pages led to some harmful results, and was exaggerated by Polybius, becomes totally unrestrained and shameless in the works of Machiavelli. What he chiefly lacks are general ideas. Besides, whatever his merits may be, his system of politics is for ever dishonoured. And this is owed to two causes: his perversity of heart and the badness of his method, which he had not even invented, but only carried to extremes."[3] But a writer's character has never been, nor ever will be, an adequate criterion for the explanation and

[1] See "Aforismi Politici," 28, 29, 35. "Opere dei T. Campanella," selected, arranged, and annotated by A D'Ancona. Turin, Pomba, 1854, vol. ii pp. 16, 17.

[2] Barthélemy Saint Hilaire, "Politique d'Aristote, traduite en Français," Paris, 1848.

[3] Ibid., "Politique d'Aristote," &c., Préface, p. cxxvi and *fol.*

None of this uncertainty is to be found in the language of another sovereign of later date, and very superior to the Queen of Sweden in political capacity and character. Frederic the Great of Prussia wrote in his youth a "Réfutation du Prince de Machiavel," that has been published in our day in its genuine form; but was already known through its publication by Voltaire in 1740, under the title of "L'Antimachiavel," and revised and corrected by him. Frederic attacks Machiavelli with characteristic energy, and, coming forward as the defender of the outraged honour of kings, says that the book of "Il Principe" is to be regarded as the production of a man wishing to be the teacher of thieves and assassins. Examining Machiavelli's maxims one by one, he follows the example of Possevino, Gentillet, and many others, by isolating them from surrounding conditions, and from the object determining their meaning, treats them as general and unconditional rules of conduct, and as rules of morality, and thus speedily and easily confutes them, without perceiving that in this way he does battle, not with Machiavelli, but, with a personage of his own invention. He hotly defends the loyalty, justice, and honour which should be, he says, the virtues of sovereigns, and winds up with the usual conclusion that a political system like that advised in the "Prince" would ensure the certain ruin of all who tried to pursue it. So explicit a condemnation, pronounced by the man who was afterwards a great military and political genius, and the real founder of the Prussian monarchy and its power, unavoidably threw a great weight into the scale against Machiavelli[1]

Only the natural question was now raised—What rules of politics were followed by Frederic, those of Machiavelli or those of the "Antimachiavelli"? and there could be no hesitation as to the reply. The unexpected and unjustifiable attack upon Maria Theresa; the conquest of Silesia; the treaties of alliance so often made and often broken without scruple and without faith, abundantly proved that in action he was one of the most faithful followers of the doctrines of the "Prince," that he had so fiercely

possibly by the hand of the royal annotater. Professor Ernesto Monaci, of the Roman University, has kindly allowed us free use of this volume, which belongs to him. See Appendix, document xix.

[1] "L'Antimachiavel" was brought out by Voltaire in 1740, without the author's name, and with the date: À la Haze, Van Duren, 1741. "La Réfutation du Prince de Machiavel," of which the whole of the original manuscript was found, with the exception of the second chapter, that is accordingly lost to us, was published in 1848, in vol. viii. of the great edition of the complete works of Frederic the Great, edited by Professor Preuss, and printed at the Royal Printing Office of Berlin, by order of the Prussian Government.

a woman whose life was full of the strangest vicissitudes, who resigned her crown and then forsook the religion of her forefathers to become a Catholic; who was not devoid of political capacity, and troubled by few scruples; who, after her descent from the throne, stained her hands in the blood of the man she had loved, and ended her life in Rome in the society of artists and the study of Machiavelli's "Prince." But the only conclusion to be drawn from the perusal of these notes is that the Queen lived during a period of transition, and that her mind wavered between an admiration for Machiavelli, equal to that of Charles V., and the aversion soon to be conceived for him by princes bent upon reform. She undoubtedly admired Machiavelli, for she continually wrote on the margin of the book: "*Que cela est bien dit! Que ceci est beau et vra! Vérité incontestable! Maxime admirable!*" Other maxims, however, she often rejected with indignation. Where Machiavelli remarks that he who seeks to be honest among many bad men procures his own destruction, she exclaims: "What does that matter? No interest can be greater than that of keeping your word." And at another point: "I doubt whether the empire of the world were worth so great a price." But then she gradually falls back into agreement with Machiavelli, and when he narrates the murders committed in Romagna by Cæsar Borgia, she allows that they were crimes, but coldly adds: "There are other nobler and safer ways of ridding ourselves of our enemies." She admits that force and arms are the only means unfailingly successful in politics, and where Machiavelli praises in general terms Cæsar Borgia's capacity and daring, she immediately notes: "Grand qualities these! I am well assured of that." She also shows much admiration for Alexander VI., "who was a great Pope, whatever may be said of him." And this oscillation of opinion goes on to the end. She nobly declares: "There is no greatness worthy of purchase at the cost of crime, we can be neither great nor happy in this fashion, and the bad can rarely enjoy their prosperity." But when *àpropos* to Cæsar Borgia, Machiavelli speaks of cruelties being worthy of praise or blame accordingly as they are well or ill employed, then the ex-Queen is convinced, and notes in the margin: "*Cela n'est pas mal dit.*" And shortly after she again allows that, undoubtedly in politics as in surgery, "there are certain ills only to be cured by blood and fire."[1]

[1] The volume annotated by Christina bears the following title, "Le Prince de Nicolas Machiavel, secretaire et citoien de Florence, traduit et commenté," par A. N. Amelot, sieur de la Houssaie. Amsterdam, Wetstein, 1683. At the end of the dedicatory letter to Lorenzo dei Medici, the date 1684 is added in manuscript,

the "Principe," and overwhelms Machiavelli with infamy. According to him, the most unjust and most atrocious actions are permissible when they have interest and ambition for their aim. Subjects are slaves, whose life and death depend from the will of the sovereign, just as the lambs of a flock, whose milk and wool are intended for the profit of their master, may all be put to the slaughter at that master's pleasure."[1]

Schooled in the humanitarian philosophy of the eighteenth century, although by nature violent, ambitious, and unscrupulous, ignorant of Italian history and literature, and totally unacquainted with Machiavelli's other works, it was impossible for Frederic to comprehend the true meaning of the "Prince" evolved in the author's brain, after the likeness of those tyrants of the Renaissance, who achieved the unity of the State and the people by forcibly subjecting them to their own ambitious designs. He could neither discern nor understand, and indeed would have indignantly protested against any one who should have tried to demonstrate to him that the "Prince" of Machiavelli was the historic and necessary forerunner of the sovereign of the eighteenth century. Yet the great Prussian king himself afforded the clearest proof of the close relationship between the two personages, and none knew better than he how to derive advantage from the very maxims he condemned In his own case he certainly thought those maxims justified by the end that he had in view, and by the inexorable necessity of practising them for the benefit of the State; but this was exactly the manner in which Machiavelli had justified them in the "Prince." As far back as the early part of the sixteenth century the Florentine had likewise discerned that the new tyranny would serve as a preparation for the new liberty, and with prophetic vision had traced the evolution of the reforming sovereign of the future from the prince of his own time. As we have seen, he frequently touched upon this idea in the "Discourses," much less frequently in the "Prince;" but when, in the final chapter of the latter work, he clearly expounded it by means of the magnificent exhortation in which the public welfare is superposed and exalted above everything else as the crowning aim of the work, Frederic then withholds criticism and is silent, because any examination of this chapter would have driven him to the conclusion that his grounds for censure were cut from beneath him.

Granted the very limited historical and literary equipment of the great King, who of all Machiavelli's works had read only the

[1] "Réfutation du Prince de Machiavel," chap. i. p 190 and fol of the volume before quoted.

combated in words. His biography affords the most striking evidence that a ruler does not necessarily rush to his destruction by following the counsels of Machiavelli, but, on the contrary, may succeed in establishing the glory and greatness of his State, and win the admiration—almost the idolatry—of his people during his life and after his death. Why, then, had Frederic adopted a tone in such open contradiction with his own acts? As usual, a thousand hypotheses were started. It was said that his lofty intellect discerned good, while his natural depravity urged him to evil; it was said that his having written "L'Antimachiavel" was a stroke of the most consummate Machiavellism, in order to gain credit for being different from what he really was, the better to succeed in his designs when on the throne. But these subtleties were alien to his character, and are refuted by his letters, which serve rather to show us the sincerity of his indignation against Machiavelli. We believe that a far simpler explanation may be given.

Both the character and the moral and political conditions of sovereigns in their own states were, as we have already observed, considerably changed from what they had been in Machiavelli's day. That which really constitutes the historic grandeur of Frederic of Prussia, and renders him, all his sins notwithstanding, a great man and a great king, is the profound feeling that identified him with his people. On the eve of the battle of Rossbach, he wrote to his prime minister: "In case I were made prisoner, it is my will that the war should be carried on under the command of my brother as though I had never existed. He and the ministers will have to promise me on their heads not to think of conceding anything for my ransom." A man animated by this deep conviction of the duty of sacrificing himself to the greatness and glory of his people and his State, although, in pursuance of this aim, never allowing himself to be arrested by scruples of conscience, could not fail to be roused to unconquerable indignation by a writer offering as a model for his imitation the image of a prince seeking to subordinate both State and people to his personal pleasure alone. And if Frederic's judgment was faulty, that does not prevent his anger from being sincere when he said that: "Machiavelli has not understood the true nature of the sovereign, who should prefer to all things the greatness and happiness of his people. Far from being the absolute master of those who are under his rule, he is only the first of their servants, and should be the instrument of their welfare, as they are the instrument of his glory. What then becomes of all ideas of personal ambition and despotism? It is this that razes to its foundations the book of

Napoleon I., the greatness of whose political and military gen none can deny, was again in conditions but little removed fr those contemplated by Machiavelli, whom he accordingly admir Napoleon was literally a new prince, owing everything to fortu to his own courage and ability; a usurper evoked by histc necessity for the purpose of rescuing France from the chaos i which she had been hurled by the Revolution. Whereas dominant feeling, the determinant characteristic of Frederic, his identification with the State and the people in whose midst was born, for whom it was his duty and his desire to live, anc whom he styled himself the head servant; Napoleon I., on contrary, commanded and guided nationalities to whom he apparently an alien. This conviction is often admirably depic by his own words: "Mais après tout," he said, "un homme d'E est il fait pour être sensible? N'est ce pas un personnage—cc plètement excentrique, toujours seul d'un côté, avec le monde l'autre?"[1] And not only was his whole career, as indeed that many of the greatest sovereigns, a continual exemplification of theories of the "Prince," but he frequently used terms and pressed opinions and sentiments that seem to be borrowed fr Machiavelli. Like the latter, he had a very bad opinion of m and was firmly convinced that they were unfailingly and sol moved by personal interests.[2] He, too, held to the axiom that conduct of the statesman should be judged by special rules entir apart from those of private life. "The acts of the statesm which considered individually are so often blamed by the wo form an integral part of a great work, afterwards to be admir and by which alone they should be judged. Elevate your ima nation, look farther before you, and you will see that the p sonages you deem violent, cruel, and what not, are only politici knowing how to master their passions, and expert in calculati the effect of their actions. I have shed blood and it was my du I may perhaps shed more, but without anger, and merely becau blood-letting is one of the prescriptions of political surgery. I the man of the State, I am the Revolution."[3] On reading t and other similar speeches of his, it is easily seen why Napole I. was so great an admirer of the Machiavelli so much detested Frederic II.[4]

[1] "Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat." Paris, Lévy, 1880. Tome 1, 335–38.

[2] This is confirmed in almost identical words, both in the "Mémoires Madame Rémusat," and those of Prince Metternich.

[3] "Mémoires de Madame de Rémusat," *loc. cit.*

[4] "Je crois avoir lu quelque part que Napoléon faissit gran cas de Guicciardi ce qui est certain, c'est qu'il admirait sincèrement Machiavel." So writes Pri Metternich in his "Mémoires," &c. Paris, Plon, 1880, vol i. p. 281, note.

"Prince"; granted his own views of the duties of a sovereign; granted the erroneous premises from which he started, all the rest becomes a logical and necessary consequence that need cause us no surprise. And thus, in fact, while his life was the plainest commentary and surest confirmation of many of the truths expounded in the "Prince," his "Antimachiavel" was merely a parody on them. Mohl was right in saying that Frederic's composition was "not a criticism but a misinterpretation, inasmuch as he combats a figment of his own brain, and that there is accordingly no undue severity in saying of him that his work is a schoolboy exercise upon an ill-understood theme."[1] We may add, nevertheless, that in spite of this the "Antimachiavel" is an historical document of considerable value, for while doing little honour to the writer, who failed to comprehend Machiavelli, it does great honour to the sovereign who, even in early youth, appreciated the loftiness of his own mission in the world.

It is certain that all, and particularly the so-called moral sciences, are closely connected with the society amid which they are born and developed; but, more than all the rest, political science is specially subject to this law. For with regard to this science, not only is there a continual change in the ideas, knowledge, and mode of thought of those engaged in its study, but even in the subject on which it turns, namely, human society. And as regards Machiavelli's doctrines, the fact is still more patent, for his writings may truly be said to be identified with the society and times in which he lived, and his ideas have so objective and impersonal a value as to have almost the aspect of historical events. This, too, is the reason why statesmen have judged Machiavelli so differently, according to the different conditions by which they were surrounded. Charles V. had a great admiration for the "Prince," with whom he was in sympathy; Frederic II., being in totally different political conditions, blamed its author;

[1] "Vielmehr ist die ganze Arbeit des Prinzen, ein grosses Missverständniss." He therefore, continues Mohl, "bekampft nur ein selbst-geschaffenes Scheinbild. . . . Dass diese Arbeit also eine im Wesentlichen verfehlte und eine des kunftigen grossen Staatsmannes, welcher sie schrieb, nicht wurdig ist, unterliegt keinem Zweifel. Es ist nicht zu hart geurtheilt, wenn sie als eine Schulerarbeit über einen falsch aufgefassten Gegenstand bezeichnet wird" (Mohl, *op. cit.*, p. 553). Far more lenient is the judgment of Trendelenburg, although it leads to an almost similar conclusion. He makes a much closer examination of Frederic's essay, but shows slighter knowledge of Machiavelli's works. Besides, he was delivering an address at the festival in honour of the great King, and was therefore compelled to a more indulgent verdict upon the book. "Machiavell und Antimachiavell, Vortrag zum Gedächtniss Friederichs des Grossen gehalten am 25 Januar, 1855, in der koniglichen Akademie der Wissenschaften," von Adolf Trendelenburg. Berlin, bei G. Bethge, 1855.

not led his Prince by the path of virtue and honour, but, on the contrary, too often *aberravit a regia hac via*. This admission, however, did not suffice to save him from the speedy attacks of Machiavelli's foes, who compelled him to stand upon his defence.[1] Soon after Lord Bacon of Verulam came forward, and, as one versed in public affairs and a promoter of experimental philosophy, he openly declared in favour of Machiavelli, saying that gratitude was owed to him and to all who, like him, had studied that which men do, instead of that which they ought to do.[2] These words clearly prove that he had an accurate perception of one side, but of one side only, of Machiavelli. For although the latter examined that which men do, it was in order to discover that which they ought to do in certain given circumstances in order to succeed in their ends. On this point his works abound in counsel and precept. Hence Trajano Boccalini, writing in the same century a satirical burlesque upon Machiavelli, was right in representing him as defending himself from the sentence of death at the stake, to which he was condemned by the tribunal of Apollo, in the following terms: "I do not understand why I should be condemned when my only crime has been to describe the conduct and deeds of princes in the manner narrated to us by all the histories. If they are not punished for that which they do, why should I be condemned to the flames for having described their deeds?" In consequence of this defence Machiavelli was about to be acquitted, when the fiscal advocate stated that he had been seen by night in the midst of a flock of sheep, in whose jaws he was trying to insert the teeth of dogs. Accordingly, said the advocate, it would be no longer possible to manage the flock as before by means of a single shepherd with a whistle and a whip. And thereupon Machiavelli was condemned to death.[3] The meaning of the fable is obvious.

Also in the sixteenth century, Alberigo Gentile, the celebrated author of the treatise, "Sul diritto della guerra," clearly perceived that Machiavelli was no mere narrator of facts, but, by means of his works, had sought and striven to promote freedom. He therefore styled him "democratiæ laudator et assertor accrimus . . . tyrannidis summe inimicus," and added that his real object was to reveal the secrets of tyranny to the people under colour of giving

[1] J. Lipsius, "Liber adversus dialogistam," p. 37, edition of 1594. See also the preface of the same to bk. vi. of his "Politicorum."

[2] "Gratias agamus Machiavello et hujusmodi scriptoribus, qui aperte et indissimulanter proferunt quid homines facere soleant, non quid debeant" ("De augmentis Scientiarum," bk. vii. chap. ii.).

[3] Boccalini, "Ragguagli di Parnaso," centuria i. ragguaglio 89.

Prince Metternich, on the contrary, who was a great antagonist of Napoleon and the opposing representative of old traditions and European reaction, was also a declared adversary of Machiavelli, and speaks of him in his "Memoirs" with much contempt. It is not worth our while to examine here the few words on this subject contained in one of the notes to the Prince's "Memoirs,"[1] for they are merely the usual empty and valueless commonplaces. Intent upon describing himself, not as he really was, but as he wished to be regarded by posterity, he continually insists upon the indissoluble union of morality with genuine policy and genuine diplomacy which is bound to resort to none but loyal and honest means. Starting from these principles, to which it is well known how little he adhered in reality, he makes war upon the Revolution, upon Napoleon, and upon Machiavelli, always reiterating that morality, loyalty, and justice are the only standards by which the actions of princes and peoples, and the real value of every course of policy can be accurately judged. When, however, Metternich proceeds to investigate the character of Napoleon I., and inquires whether he was intrinsically good or intrinsically bad, what reply does he make? "To a man like Napoleon," he says, "neither the one nor the other epithet can be applied in the sense usually given to these words. Absorbed in his mighty enterprise, he marched straight forwards, crushing all obstacles in his path, without being able ever to stop his chariot. He had two aspects: as a private individual, he was very homely and very easy to get on with; as a statesman, was totally without feeling. There is but one way to judge his greatness, and that solely consists in being able to judge his work and the age that he succeeded in dominating. If this work was truly great, Napoleon I. must also be held to be great; if, on the contrary, it was ephemeral, so likewise is his glory."[2] This whole train of argument, certainly one of the best passages in Metternich's "Memoirs," is the practical negation of the theory that he asserts to have been the constant creed of his life, and that he used as a weapon against Machiavelli. For here he unconsciously concludes by recognizing the Florentine's fundamental doctrine of politics and morality being things apart.

Machiavelli, however, was not long left undefended. No sooner was independent criticism inaugurated in the sixteenth century by the new philosophy, than weighty voices were instantly raised in his favour. Justus Lipsius was one of the first to declare his belief in Machiavelli's superiority over all other writers on princely government. He only regretted that the Florentine had

[1] See note quoted above.
[2] Metternich, "Mémoires," &c., vol. i. pp. 289-92.

many when that country was struggling for consolidation in no very different way. This explains the great number of German books, pamphlets, essays, reviews, and newspapers which in recent time, when venting patriotic sentiments have alluded to Machiavelli with genuine enthusiasm. Here is one of the many examples which might be cited. In "A Defence of Machiavellism," by Herr Bollman, published in 1858, the author starts by remarking that political morality is profoundly different from private morality; that the one has hardly any relation with the other, and that, amid the wickedness of mankind and the miseries of the fatherland, it would be madness to try to save the country by means of lofty and loyal conduct: that firmness of will and clearness of mind are needed, apart from all sentimentality. Machiavelli had the grand merit of frankly expounding these truths. He believed that Cæsar Borgia possessed the requisite qualities, and therefore proposed him as a model. And then, to show that this defence was not derived from any fantastic and theoretical admiration for a foreigner, Bollman addresses himself to Germany, endeavouring to prove that none of her political parties could have saved her had not a royal armed reformer arisen in Prussia of the exact kind described by Machiavelli. This prince, he says, may follow in his internal policy the dictates of justice and morality; but in foreign conflict he must adopt the counsels of Machiavelli, must think neither of gentleness nor cruelty, neither of faith, nor honour, nor shame, but solely of the good of the fatherland. O King of the future! when will you arise?[1]

These writers appeared when Machiavellian studies had already made considerable progress, and therefore it frequently happened that this one or that digressed into historical and scientific considerations of various value. Yet with all the leading idea was a patriotic sentiment that, although praiseworthy, was often inopportune, and ended by endowing Machiavelli with ideas that he never conceived, or never, at least, in the entirely modern form in which they were attributed to him.

Meanwhile a more scientific method of criticism had gradually arisen, and was making slow but constant progress. For instance, Raumer and Schlegel believed that the source of Machiavelli's errors was to be discovered in the fact of his conception of the

[1] "Er wird, wie Machiavelli, dieser grosse italienische Staatsmann, lehrt, das Wohl des Volkes heilig halten, aber dem Auslande gegenuber weder Milde noch Grausamkeit, weder Treue noch Wortbruch, weder Ehre noch Schande, sondern nur Einheit, Grosse und Unabhangigkeit des Vaterlandes kennen. Solch'ein Furst aber wirde alle Hindernisse besiegen, er wird gross, machtig, unwiderstehlich sein. Wann wirst Du erscheinen, Konig der Zukunft," &c., &c. (Karl Bollmann, "Vertheidigung des Machiavellismus," p. 102. Quedlinburg, 1858.)

instruction to princes.[1] And this opinion found an ever-increasing number of supporters. Rousseau said, in his "Contrât Social," that the "Prince" was a book for republicans, since, while feigning to give lessons to monarchs, it had really given them to the people.[2] And Alfieri, in whom loftiness of intellect was joined with nobility of character, and who never uttered Machiavelli's name without adding the epithet *divine*, declared that "although some few maxims of tyranny are to be found scattered through the 'Prince,' they are expounded only to make known to the people the cruelties of kings, and certainly not to teach the latter that which they have always done and will do. For we find every page of the 'Histories' and the 'Discourses' breathing a spirit of magnanimity, justice, and liberty. Nor is it possible to read them without being inflamed by those sentiments. Yet Machiavelli was believed to be a teacher of tyranny, of vice, and of baseness; and so it has come about that modern Italy, past mistress in servility, has not recognized the only true political philosopher she has ever had."[3]

Although these writers only spoke of Machiavelli incidentally, yet the authority of their learning and genius was far superior to that of those who had constituted themselves his accusers, and therefore of far greater weight. Yet for the sake of justice we are driven to remark that both sides, while travelling by opposite roads, fell into the same error. Machiavelli's detractors thought that, for the condemnation of his doctrines, it was sufficient to blacken his character. His defenders, on the other hand, believed that by extolling his patriotism, and proving his love of liberty, they afforded, at the same time, implicit proof of the truth and value of his doctrines. It was not yet understood that if the Machiavelli question was not a case of conscience, neither was it a controversy of patriotism and liberalism. The essential point should have been: Had he spoken truly or falsely? What was the scientific worth of his doctrines? Everything else should have been considered of secondary importance. Even if a defender of despotism, he might still have been a man of great genius, as he

[1] "De Legationibus," bk. iv. chap ix.

[2] "En feignant de donner des leçons aux rois, il en a donné des grandes aux peuples Le 'Prince' de Machiavel est le livre des républicains." And he adds in a note: "Machiavel était un honnête homme et un bon citoyen; mais attaché à la maison des Médicis, il était forcé dans l'oppression de sa patrie de déguiser son amour pour la liberté. Le choix seul de son exécrable héros manifeste assez son intention secrète, et l'opposition des maximes de son livre du 'Prince' à celles de ses 'Discours' sur Tite-Live et de son histoire de Florence, démontre que ce profond politique n'a eu jusqu' ici que des lecteurs superficiels ou corrompus" (Rousseau, "Œuvres," Genéve, 1782, vol. i p. 272).

[3] "Del Principe e delle Lettere," bk ii chap. ix.

State being of too old-world and pagan a sort to include any notion of individual worth, and that its only recognized elements were intelligence and force. "In the State, according to Machiavelli," added Schlegel, "nothing is known of God Almighty and His Divine precepts; nor is it perceived that the ills of Italy proceeded from the general corruption which had first of all to be cured."[1] Matter, on the contrary, discovered the source of his errors in his abstraction of politics from morality. For in this way, he said, the rights of the people were forgotten; and the prince sought a State for his own use, with an aim independent of justice.[2] These theories were but feeble and uncertain attempts; but, at least, it was beginning to be acknowledged that the merits and demerits of the author's doctrines were to be sought, not in his character, but in his writings, and that to these must be applied the scientific standards held to be correct.

A far more recent writer, Herr Franck, turned his talent and learning in the same direction. According to him, Machiavelli, after dividing politics from morality, and examining only two forms of government—the monarchical and the republican—neither discovered, nor tried to discover, the links which may join monarchy with liberty. His errors are not derived from an evil that he never desired, but from the premises from which he logically deduced them. The various social elements—conscience, the individual—are subordinated to the unity of the State; vice and virtue considered as relative qualities to be neither esteemed nor condemned on their own merits, but only for their effects. For these reasons odium remains attached to the Florentine's name, even when unjust accusations are withdrawn. In fact, according to Franck, Machiavelli was a man of no principle, who in political affairs made no distinction between good and evil, recognized no absolute right, no inviolable duty, and subordinated the most sacred rights of humanity to reasons of State.[3] Leaving aside the renewal by Franck, although in a milder form, of the old personal attacks on Machiavelli's character, critics of this kind have two capital defects They endeavour to deduce the whole of Machiavelli's doctrines from certain few ideas of great simplicity and clearness, and concentrate on these their entire attention. But Machiavelli has no rigorously systematic form; both his mind

[1] F. Schlegel, "Geschichte der alten und neuen Literatur," a work that has often been translated. Raumer, "Uber die geschichtliche Entwickelung der Begriffe, Recht, Staat und Politik," Leipzig, 1832, p. 27.

[2] Matter, "Histoire des doctrines morales et politiques des trois derniers siècles," vol 1. pp 68–88. Paris and Geneva, 1836. Three vols.

[3] A Franck, "Réformateurs et Publicistes de l'Europe," p. 287 and fol. Paris, M. Lévy, 1864.

might have been an empty rhetorician and yet a defender of liberty. Nevertheless, this did not seem to be comprehended in the least, and for a long time, particularly in Italy, criticism pursued the same course. When national aspirations began to arise amongst us, and literature became the most efficacious means of preparing for our political redemption, then all things, criticism included, assumed patriotic tendencies and aims. Accordingly, Machiavelli the republican, enemy of the papacy, and supporter of Italian unity and independence, became the idol of many on this head alone. Foscolo, after singing his praises in the "Sepolleri" as the foe of tyrants,[1] extolled him in his "Prose" as the adversary of Popes and aliens, as a promoter of republican government and national independence.[2] Ridolfi, in his book upon the "Prince,"[3] thought to exonerate Machiavelli from every charge by remarking that he had sought to free his country from foreign rule, and that in such cause all means were lawful. Therefore our Italian critics of this school continued for some time to publish works inspired by patriotic sentiments, showing much study of Machiavelli, and sincere admiration for him; but which—excepting one essay by Zambelli, very noteworthy from other points of view, and that will be referred to farther on—only reiterated with more or less eloquence the same general and indefinite ideas.

Criticism of an almost similar sort, if with greater parade of learning, made its way even into Germany. When the aspirations of that country towards national unity under the Prussian rule were gaining vigour, and public attention was directed to the examination of the real political conditions of the country, men began to have a more exact idea of the practical difficulties to be encountered, and of the only means by which they could be overcome, and finally comprehending the sound worth of Machiavelli's maxims, studied and admired him far more than they had ever done before. His invocation to a princely deliverer to unite the country and free it from foreign rule, and his enmity towards the Pope, were reasons which, even as they increased his favour in Italy when that country wished to overthrow the temporal power of the Pope, and, with Piedmont at her head, drive out all foreign oppressors, also raised his popularity in Protestant Ger-

[1] "Io, quando il monumento
Vidi, ove posa il corpo di quel grande,
Che, temprando lo scettro ai regnatori,
Gli allôr ne sfronda ed alle genti svela,
Di che lacrime grondi e di che sangue," &c.

[2] Foscolo, "Prose letterarie," Firenze, Le Monnier, 1850, vol. ii. p. 433.

[3] A. Ridolfi, "Pensieri intorno allo scopo di N. Machiavelli, nel libro del Principe." Milan, 1810.

becomes a systematic theory of means, without any presupposed rectitude of purpose"[1] His belief in the possibility of excluding the moral problem from the special field of politics caused him to fall into "a radical error that vitiates and corrupts his whole system, and his doctrine is thus deprived of the solid basis required for it."[2] In this way, if his whole system is corrupt and his theories lack their necessary foundation, the intrinsic value of his doctrines is reduced to very little. Their merit and value can only exist in their method and accessories.

Besides, according to Mancini, the least original portion of Machiavelli's works is that treating of princely government, because this is borrowed from Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas[3] We have already seen the incorrectness of this assertion. He then goes on to say that Machiavelli succeeded in showing that an absolute prince is forced, for the sake of self-preservation, to employ immorality and injustice as ordinary means of government; must always look to dynastic ends, instead of to the welfare of the State and the people, and that this, as a natural consequence, leads to the wisest and most peremptory condemnation of absolute monarchy.[4] Unluckily, however, this indirect merit cannot be assigned to Machiavelli, for, on the contrary, he sought to show the historical necessity of despotism in certain social conditions, a necessity of which the Europe of his day furnished undeniable proofs. He was profoundly convinced that absolute monarchy alone could have the strength to unite a corrupt people and preserve it from anarchy, and explicitly says so. In this, and not in his indirect condemnation of absolutism, consists the full meaning of the "Prince," which was no plagiarism upon Aristotle, but an original product of the intellect and the times of Machiavelli; therefore in acquitting or condemning him we must steadily keep that meaning in view.

Mancini also endeavoured to trace Machiavelli's doctrine back to a few simple premises that by no means comprise it in full, but, in spite of his study of these premises, he fails to show the connection between the doctrine and the times that gave it birth. Occasionally he would seem to examine the "Prince" and the "Discourses" as though they were works of our own day. He pays no attention to the historical conditions under which they were composed, and in according due praise to Machiavelli for having separated political science from scholastic lore, he is alike oblivious of Machiavelli's precursors and of those who had worked with him for the same ends. Mancini's keen intellect could hardly have

[1] Mancini, *op. cit* p 263.
[2] Ibid, *op. cit.* p. 311.
[3] Ibid., *op. cit.* p. 303
[4] Ibid., *op. cit.* p. 317.

and his works are extremely complex; his doctrines composed of very varied elements, between which it is sometimes hard to discover any connecting link. And without examining them on all sides, and under all their numerous aspects, it is almost impossible to comprehend them. The separation of politics from morality is but one of the thousand questions demanding the critic's attention. Another fault of the school was that of undertaking the examination of Machiavelli's writings with little preliminary study of his life or his times; thus the practical aim of his works frequently escaped them, and it was impossible to seize the true aspect of his doctrines. Certainly the "Prince" can never be understood without previous knowledge of the circumstances by which it was inspired, of the conditions in which it was written, and the practical purpose it had in view. While it is certainly true that both this work and the "Discourses" give a pagan conception of the State, yet, unless it be remembered that this conception took a new form in Italy at this time—a form peculiar to the Renaissance—and unless it be determined what this form really was, Machiavelli can never be understood.

Among these critics P. S. Mancini must also be ranked; being a much later writer, he enlarged the boundaries of the school, but failed to avoid all its blunders. He starts by declaring his intention of examining the intrinsic value of Machiavelli's doctrines, in the belief that he is the first to make the attempt. For him also the chief question consists in the separation of politics from morality—a separation that he unreservedly condemns. But he justly adds that: Machiavelli sought to emancipate the State from the Church, and therefore separated politics from theology, religion, morality and abstract scholastic philosophy, resorting instead to the historical and experimental method.[1] Mancini urges strongly, and with reason, that Machiavelli never thought of denying virtue, justice, and liberty, but, on the contrary, admired and extolled them, as is clearly evidenced by numerous passages that are quoted and reproduced. As, however, the chief point always rests upon the separation of politics from morality, and as this is declared by Mancini to be a very grievous error, thus the quotations are of no avail to save Machiavelli from condemnation. For the Florentine's first end being to secure the independence of the State, he sought every means, whether good or bad, tending to that end. It was in this way that he became the standard bearer of the utilitarians. "In Machiavelli's hands the science of politics, left to itself and nourished in savage independence,

[1] Pasquale, Stanislao Mancini, "Prelezioni con un Saggio sul Machiavelli," pp. 245-46. Naples, Marghieri, 1873.

and Titus Livy; but in point of fact pays but little attention to his subject, his thoughts being turned to the future of Italy, for whose aid he invokes the experience of the past. The greatness of Rome did not seem to him to have had its source in any inherent strength of the Roman people, but in certain maxims, certain axioms which he now expounds to Italians, in order to teach them how to arrive at the same greatness. Only, to ensure success another people is needed—a people endowed with strength, virtue, and a fresh education. Therefore he was always chasing the impossible, and on becoming aware of this often fell into despair; thus he was at last persuaded of the necessity for a despotic prince who would cure the general corruption by violent means. Even in his "Art of War," after mooting many plans as to the best method of supplying Italy with an army like that of ancient Rome, he ends by despairingly recurring to the dominant idea of the "Discourses," namely, that of the need of a powerful State. The maker of this State would be as Philip of Macedon, and would become the master of Italy. This idea of bringing about the unity of his country—and which forms the theme of the "Prince"—was already afloat during the Renaissance, and was frequently mentioned by writers of the period.[1] In the days of Leo X. the Medici had strong hopes of obtaining possession of the whole, or at least of the greater part, of Italy, and their friends were even more sanguine. It was during this state of things that the "Prince" was written.

Ranke next goes on to examine that which he calls the source of the "Prince," and quotes certain passages which he considers to be copied from Aristotle, especially as regarding the nature of tyrants. These passages, however, are not only limited to a few expressions common to St. Thomas Aquinas, Savonarola, and many other writers of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but

examine Ranke's work in its original form. This, indeed, may be said to have remained unaltered since the changes afterwards made in it are of very little value.

[1] Ranke here cites the words addressed to Julius II. by the poet Flaminio:

"Dux opus est acris, populos qui cogat in unum;
Qui male concordes iungat ad arma manus."

He also quotes Polidoro Vergilio, who, twenty years later, wrote his book, "De Prodigiis," in London, and in dedicating it to Francesco Maria, Duke of Urbino (1st of August, 1526), expressed his hope that from that prince would proceed the regeneration of Italy. And in conclusion Ranke also quotes the words of the more recent writer Varchi, who, in speaking of the desire of the Venetians to weaken Italy in order to become her masters, had added, "And verily there will be no end to the troubles and misfortunes of Italy until they (the Venetians)—since no such benefit is to be expected from the Pope—or some prudent and fortunate prince may assume possession of her" ("Storia Fiorentina," vol. i. p. 117. Florence, 1843).

been betrayed into this error had he given closer study to preceding critics.

For some time previously authors had begun to consider Machiavelli in connection with his times ; indeed, even as far back as the beginning of this century, attempts were made to that effect. Rehberg, who wrote at the time of Germany's sufferings at the hands of the French, and doubtless influenced by those events, treated of the "Prince" as of a work of vast genius, but void of any lofty ideal, and consequently taking no heed of the real welfare of the human race. Republican government having become an impossibility in Italy, Machiavelli had sought a practical remedy, by imagining a strong and powerful monarch, such as he hoped to find in one of the Medici. In this way he thought to drive the barbarians from Italy, allowing the people to help in the noble enterprise when and how it best could. In judging of his counsels it is necessary to estimate the political conditions by which they were dictated. The immorality of many of these counsels could not be repugnant to an author who was also stained by the corrupt manners of his time.[1] Almost at the same period Ginguené, in his "History of Italian Literature," endeavoured to pass a large and comprehensive judgment on the works of Machiavelli, taking account of the times in which they were composed and the practical object that they had in view.[2]

But these works, notwithstanding their merits as regarded novelty of research, their examination of Machiavelli from many points of view, studying both the man and his writings in connection with his time and with his purpose, failed to arrive at any satisfactory result, owing to their lack of a truly scientific method. They gave us a series of observations more or less acute and original, but always incomplete and uncertain. The first attempts towards really scientific inquiry began with the new method of historical criticism, and were originated by Ranke and Leo. These writers have bequeathed to us only a few pages upon Machiavelli ; but in them the new road is traced out. Leopold Ranke, whose extraordinary talents were evidenced in his earliest youth, and who was subsequently the founder of a new historical school in Germany, published his short study on Machiavelli, together with others upon different Italian historians of the sixteenth century, in 1824.[3] In the "Discourses," he tells us, Machiavelli treats of Roman history

[1] A. W. Rehberg, "Das Buch vom Fursten von Niccolò Machiavelli ubersetzt und mit Einleitung und Anmerkungen versehen." Hanover, 1810.

[2] "Histoire littéraire d'Italie." Paris, 1811–1823, ten vols., vol. viii. (1817) pp 1–184.

[3] "Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber," pp. 182–202. Leipzig and Berlin, 1824. We do not here quote the second edition of 1874, because it is requisite to

Florence. In conclusion, Machiavelli sought the salvation of Italy, then in desperate peril, and was courageous enough to prescribe poison as the sole remedy.[1]

Therefore the keen glance and superior intellect of Ranke had recognized the patriotism of Machiavelli, and the inspiration that his works had derived from it. But while on the one hand the German historian hardly noted that Machiavelli, after having written the "Prince," also tried to obtain some personal advantage by it, on the other he regarded it too exclusively as a book of the moment, and wrongly denied it all general and scientific character. Nor is it true that the "Prince" was written for Lorenzo exclusively, since it was first addressed to Giuliano, and only dedicated to Lorenzo after the former's decease. And it is a still greater exaggeration to join the "Prince" and the "Discourses" together, as though forming a single work with a single aim, and to do so merely because the latter work also demonstrates the necessity of princely government in certain cases.[2]

The scientific and general character of the "Discourses" is too evident to admit of dispute. And if, as Ranke asserts, their author attributes all the greatness of the Romans to the latter's constant pursual of certain wise maxims of government and statecraft, it should have been thought necessary to investigate the worth of those maxims, which certainly would not be the poison prescribed as the sole cure for a corrupt people. The learned German, absorbed in seeking the connection between the "Prince" and the conditions in which it was written, unduly neglected the examination of the intrinsic and historical value of the doctrines therein expounded. Nevertheless, when we consider that Ranke's essay was a short composition of his early youth, our appreciation of the author's merit is considerably enhanced.

Two years after the publication of Ranke's work a translation of Machiavelli's letters appeared in Berlin by Heinrich Leo, and with a preface from his pen.[3] In this preface some of Ranke's ideas are disputed, and there are a few just and novel observations amid others of very questionable value. Leo, in fact, was one of the first to discover that the prince, as described by Machiavelli, had been a necessary and historic actuality in the Renaissance. This prince and his political conduct required explanation and justification from the point of view of historic necessity, and it was this

[1] Ranke concludes with these words: "Uns lasst endlich gerecht sein. Er suchte die Heilung Italiens; doch der Zustand desselben schien ihm so verzweifelt, dass er kuhn genug war, ihm Gift zu verschreiben" (*Op. cit.*, p. 202).

[2] "Dass ist uberkuhner Scharfsinn," as Mohl remarks at p 580 of his "Die Machiavelli Literatur."

[3] We have already quoted this book published in 1826 at Berlin.

Professor Ranke himself is obliged to admit that they were used by Machiavelli in a radically different sense. Aristotle describes the vices of the tyrant, but says that he should seek to be just and good, and maintains that justice should be the basis of the State and of politics. Machiavelli maintains, on the contrary, that the new prince, unless he wishes to come to destruction among wicked men, must preserve a semblance of goodness, but be ready to commit cruelties, and to break faith, whenever circumstances make it expedient to do so. Hence there is no real imitation even in the few sentences quoted, and the pretended source turns out to be no source at all.[1] Besides, Professor Ranke likewise admits that the "Prince" was mainly inspired by the new times, of which it was a part, and without which it would be incomprehensible. Its aim, he continues, is substantially immediate and practical, and although its chapters bear a general title, their contents are always special. It is no treatise of general advice, but a book of special counsel offered by Machiavelli to Lorenzo, and of the same sort as that he afterwards offered to Leo X. He took Cæsar Borgia for his model, because that personage resembled him to whom the "Prince" was dedicated and for whom it was written. The one, in fact, was the son, the other the nephew, of a Pope; both hoped and were capable of great conquests. The whole of the first part, *i.e.*, the first twelve chapters, refers to Lorenzo and to the conditions by which both himself and Italy were surrounded. The second and third parts, namely the last fifteen chapters, are very closely connected with the first. In conclusion, three things are, in Ranke's opinion, ascertained: 1. That Machiavelli was persuaded of Italy's need of a prince; 2. That the Medici, and Lorenzo in particular, were ready and anxious to assume this princeship; 3. That the book was not only dedicated to Lorenzo, but written for him.[2] Its true meaning to be the following: only under a prince and by cruel and violent means can this corrupt Italy become united and able to drive out the foreigner. So long as the free government of Florence was maintained Machiavelli served the Republic and was satisfied with liberty. When the Medici were restored, and he was expelled from office, the Italian awoke in him, and he sought the best method of freeing the whole country, even at the sacrifice of the liberties of Florence. Instead of this the Medici were driven out, the Republic re-established, and the popular party could not forgive him for having been ready to sacrifice to Italy the freedom of

[1] As we have noted elsewhere, the same remark was also made by Herr Leo.

[2] "Genug alles zeigt dass dieses Buch nicht allein Lorenzo'n dedicirt, sondern ganz und gar auf ihn berechnet ist" (*Op. cit.*, p. 199).

Renaissance, was too hasty, if not too superficial, in his judgment of the conditions of the human mind at that period, and of the character of the Latin races in general. And in this way he has contrived to discover two consciences, the Germanic and the Latin,[1] and then uses his discovery, not for the attenuation of Machiavelli's faults, or for the explanation of his character, but to justify increased harshness towards him. If instead he had been content to limit his judgment to the period of history upon which he was engaged, he might perhaps have arrived at conclusions of less severity and greater justice. He would also have shown more caution if, when seeking to insist upon the dissolute cynicism and scepticism which he attributes to Machiavelli, he had refrained from quoting in support of his ideas that "Description of the Plague" which no critic of importance believes to be the work of the Florentine secretary. Nor can we understand why he should have denied the talent and culture of Francesco Vettori. But if, putting aside his vagrant digressions, his too severe and ill-considered criticism, we add the very just if brief observations of Leo on the value of the "Prince" to those by Ranke on the character of Machiavelli and his political writings, we begin to have a clear perception of the path towards sure and satisfactory results. Accordingly no slight praise is owing to these two writers, especially to Ranke, although neither has left us more than a few pages upon Machiavelli, chiefly consisting of disjointed remarks. Neither the one nor the other attempted a complete study of the difficult theme.

This undertaking was assumed by Macaulay, whose celebrated Essay was published in the *Edinburgh Review* (1827), the year after the appearance of Leo's work. The essay met with very great success in England, both from its high literary merit, and because it was really the first attempt at a serious and complete study of Machiavelli. Macaulay was a man of the nineteenth century with the ideas of the eighteenth, an elegant and most eloquent writer, with an incomparable gift of narrative, great clearness of exposition, but a slenderly philosophical mind. His scientific criticism, therefore, is as weak as his literary criticism was powerful. In endeavouring to make everything excessively plain and clear he frequently eluded the most difficult points by flights of eloquence. Machiavelli was an enigma to be easily explained by his times. He began by describing how the Florentine's works abounded in sentences extolling virtue in the terms of the purest enthusiasm, side by side with others such as the most corrupt of diplomatists would hardly dare to communicate

[1] Leo, *op. cit.*, p. VIII and fol.

that Machiavelli had done. Poison or no poison, said Leo,[1] alluding to Ranke's expression, this constitutes the great importance of the book, and it was a confused instinct of its real value that lead so many to read and examine it with feelings of admiration. But (and here Leo enters upon very debateable ground) even though the book really had a great weight in the world, that is no reason for concluding that he who composed it was of equal worth. Machiavelli decidedly hoped to derive some personal advantage from his work; but what concern did he feel for the human race? He explained and justified the prince in order to please the Medici, to win employment from them, and his explanation chanced to be useful to the world. On the score of national self-love it is pardonable for an Italian to believe that such a man should have written a book for the purpose of saving his country; but no foreigner could be sufficiently ingenuous to hold that belief. How could Machiavelli, who spoke so contemptuously of his fellow-countrymen, seriously believe them capable of driving the Spanish, French and Germans from Italy? He never thought of liberating Italy: he thought of obtaining office. He addressed his book to Giuliano, and when there was nothing more to be hoped from him he dedicated it to Lorenzo, with the addition of that final chapter, so little accordant with the rest of the work.[2]

Thus the patriotism of Machiavelli, so acutely discerned and demonstrated by Ranke, was strangely denied by Leo, who, after recognizing the importance and originality of the "Prince," sought to take all merit from the author by attributing great value to the book, but pretending that this value was almost an accident of chance. He did not even discern that the last chapter was, as it were, the synthesis and explanation of the whole work. We need not say much of Leo's theory of the Germanic conscience and the Latin conscience The first, he said, undergoes change and modification according to the difference of its relations with mankind and society; the second has the unchangeability of a crystal, plays, as it were, a game of chess with the outer world, as though the good and evil in course of accomplishment neither touched nor acted upon it. To avoid entering upon a question that would be out of place in these pages, we will merely remark that Herr Leo, on the strength of a few observations upon the

[1] At pp. vii, viii, *et passim* of the already-quoted preface.

[2] Certain other German writers suppose this last chapter to have been added to the book at a later date. But this is not true. The chapter is contained in the oldest known copies of the "Prince," including those made by Buonaccorsi from the original, and one of which was made after the book had been re-composed by Machiavelli.

reasoning that speedily shows us the real nature of his criticism and betrays its weakest side.

Nothing in the world, he says, is so useless as a general maxim. If true, at best it can serve as an example to be learned by heart or as a copy slip for a charity boy. Machiavelli's chief merit, therefore, consists in having given us maxims, neither truer nor more profound than those of all other writers, but only more applicable to real life. However, even putting aside that a maxim may be practical, and yet of small value and no originality, it must be remembered that this practical character is by no means exclusively confined to Machiavelli, but is common to all the political writers, all the Italian ambassadors of the Renaissance, and is, as we have seen, to be found in a higher degree in Guicciardini. Machiavelli's chief merit rather consists in his having with perfect method built up a new science of politics founded upon history and experience. But what could a science of government possibly be if, as Macaulay pretends, general maxims were utterly valueless? He afterwards maintained a similar argument in his other celebrated Essay on Lord Bacon, when, endeavouring to show that the great philosopher's sole merit consisted in his constant search after the useful and practical, he concluded by declaring that the first inventor of shoes should be preferred to the author of the book upon Anger, inasmuch as shoes had saved many from damp and cold, whereas Seneca had probably never preserved any one from anger. He was unaware that, by this remark, he denied the value of philosophy itself, and of all the moral sciences.

Nevertheless, both the essay on Machiavelli and that on Bacon belong to the most brilliant examples of English prose. In the latter the author's sparkling eloquence is aroused by the contrast he describes between the moral degradation and intellectual loftiness of the English philosopher; in the former, on the contrary, by his description of the numerous contradictions he discerns in the character of Italians and in that of Machiavelli, as well as in Machiavelli's work. But in lieu of solving the enigma, the Essay only makes it appear even more inexplicable than it really was.

Nor is the English critic more fortunate in his endeavour to touch the real conception of Machiavelli's doctrines and to discover their errors. In his opinion the source of those errors consisted in the author's inability to distinguish between public and private good, and from his belief that a strong and prosperous State always ensures the happiness of its subjects. And this, says Macaulay, was caused by his only having in view the small commonwealths of Mediæval Italy and ancient Greece, in which public calamity or prosperity was inseparable from that of the

in cipher to one of his spies. Then, with much fervour and brilliancy of colouring, he goes on to describe the national characteristics of the Italians of that day, in whom he finds the same contradictions as in Machiavelli. Thus, according to him, the enigma is solved; all is made clear. But, even leaving aside the point that the portrait he gives to us is no more than the graphic presentment of the conventional Italian type, as it was so long accepted among foreigners, what result could be derived from it, even were the portrait as faithful as it is eloquent? Merely that there were contradictions in the character of the Italians, contradictions in the character and ideas of Machiavelli; nothing more. And thus, instead of one enigma, we have two finally resolved into one, but at the cost of denying Machiavelli any individuality or originality. While as to the intrinsic value of his political doctrines, the English critic remains in the dark, inasmuch as he fails either to explain or to judge them.

On Machiavelli's literary works his observation and judgment are very precise, and he even examines their style with a power that is most remarkable on the part of a foreigner. As a richly-endowed historian, he treats of the "Legations" with much skill and penetration, and was one of the first to note their vast treasure of information and portraiture. With these at his service he victoriously defends Machiavelli from the strange and ridiculous charge, already brought against him and even since repeated, of his having been the adviser and accomplice of Cæsar Borgia's crimes in Romagna. He places his patriotism in the strongest light, relates his persistent and generous endeavours to endow Italy with a national militia, and justly remarks that this fact alone should have sufficed to shed eternal honour on his name. And thus, by his fascinating style, he carries us through four-fifths of his essay before coming to any investigation of the "Prince," the "Discourses," and the "Histories," the chief factors of Machiavelli's fame.

The "Discourses" and the "Prince," Macaulay at last tells us, uphold one and the same theory; the former trace the progress of a conquering people, the latter that of an ambitious chief. As to the immorality of certain maxims, all, as we have seen, is supposed to be explained by reference to the times. Machiavelli was immoral because the Italy of his day was immoral, and nevertheless he was animated by the purest patriotism, and often by the purest enthusiasm for virtue, because both these qualities were existent in the Italians of the period. Next, seeking briefly to define the intrinsic value of the two works, and to give us a clear and precise idea of them, Macaulay enters upon a course of

with great ardour. The chief defects of this Essay are not only caused by its being too literary and descriptive, rather than critical and scientific, but also through its exaggeration of the historic method that too easily believes in the justification and explanation of all accomplished facts. But similar defects notwithstanding, Macaulay's composition holds its ground on the strength of being the first attempt towards a serious and finished criticism on the character and writings of Machiavelli, while the eloquence of the author's style will always cause it to be eagerly read after many other works of even greater merit shall have long been forgotten.

The year 1833 witnessed the appearance of a volume of historical essays by G. Gervinus,[1] half of which was dedicated to a work entitled "Florentinische Historiographie," that was really a new study on Machiavelli, proceeded by a few remarks upon previous Florentine historians. It is written in a monotonous, confused and colourless style, and is full of repetitions. But Gervinus endeavoured to remedy the chief defect of Macaulay; for, while devoting small attention to Machiavelli's literary works, he made a minute and careful examination of all his political writings, inclusive of the "Art of War," the "Legations," and the "Histories," seeking to discover the fundamental conception by which all are equally inspired. And he was the first to show that this political conception is also present in the "Histories," of which he discerned the scientific as well as the literary importance. He studied the "Histories" with much ardour, making useful reflections on the sources from which they were drawn, and thus being led to an examination of the earlier writers. To a deep and genuine admiration for Machiavelli he joined the advantage of having been trained in the critical school of the great German historians. But, being also one of the writers for whom literature was a means of rousing the national German spirit, he was thus impelled on the perilous course of bringing too much political feeling and patriotism into the field of criticism.

According, then, to Gervinus, some of Machiavelli's ideas were derived from practical considerations on the conditions of his time, and from acquaintance with the real state of his country; others from ideal desires, from spiritual needs of his own. He did not, as many have believed, concentrate his mind upon material things, but sought in antiquity the excellence demanded by his intellect and his heart, the excellence his country lacked, and to which his age was unable to soar. He offered the outcome of his long and difficult labour to the Italy whose re-

[1] "Historische Schriften" Frankfort on the Main. Warrentrapp, 1833

individual. All citizens were impoverished by a national defeat, enriched by a national victory. Thus Machiavelli over-rated the value of all measures by which a nation is rendered formidable to its neighbours, and undervalued those which would ensure its internal prosperity. There is some portion of truth in this, but Machiavelli's ideal did not consist in the small commonwealth of Greece and Italy, but in the commonwealth and empire of Rome.

In the Republics of the Middle Ages special associations and individual passions were in continual revolt against the central power of the State, and thus reduced it to impotence. Machiavelli instead desired a great and powerful State, and for this end would have sacrificed everything, happiness even, and internal prosperity; but he did not confound the public with the private interest. On the contrary, he most unduly sacrificed the latter to the former, because unable at the time to discern any other way of endowing nations with the unity and strength rendered supreme necessities by the anarchy of his times. Far from believing that public prosperity always and inevitably brought about that of the individual, he failed to recognize with sufficient clearness that the welfare of the individual is indispensable to the welfare of the State, and therefore praised those German republics wherein, as he thought, the individual was poor and the public rich; and above all he extolled those Roman days in which great generals, when war was over, returned empty handed to their homes, and gained their bread by digging their own fields.

When Macaulay speaks of the style of Machiavelli, and, comparing it with that of Montesquieu, demonstrates its great superiority, we are again convinced of his constant eminence as a literary critic. But it causes us no little surprise to find a so justly celebrated historian wasting his time in dwelling on the very secondary qualities—the mere qualities of style, of Machiavelli's Florentine "Histories"—without perceiving that the principal merit of these works, their main originality, consists in their being the first to investigate the logical and necessary sequence of the parties dividing the commonwealth, the varied forms of government resulting from this sequence, and the causes of these continual and changeful vicissitudes. The Essay terminates with a renewed tribute to the patriotism of Machiavelli, whose works, says Macaulay, will never be justly appreciated by Italians until the streets of their cities shall again resound with their ancient war-cry, "Popolo! popolo! muoiano i tiranni!"[1]

And in part, at least, this prophecy has been fulfilled, for no sooner was Italy free than the study of Machiavelli was resumed

[1] This often republished Essay has been also translated into many languages.

Gervinus was so warm an admirer of the patriotism and genius of Machiavelli, that he concludes his essay by saying, that in him was to be found a compendium of the whole thought and feeling of the Italian nation : the foremost nation during one of the most glorious periods of the world's history. Had Machiavelli, he finally says, possessed a closer knowledge of Greek thought, and of the Reformation then inaugurated by Martin Luther, modern Europe could scarcely boast of another man worthy to be placed on a par with him. Sometimes, however, this sincere admiration leads the German critic astray, so that on meeting with certain Machiavellian precepts which are offensive to his conscience, he too frequently tries to attenuate, instead of weighing and explaining them. What is the use of struggling to prove that Machiavelli ranks Theseus, Perseus, and Moses higher than Cæsar Borgia ? What of trying to prove that he does not unrestrictedly accept the theory of the end justifying the means, since, allowing for every attenuation, so much always remains to be justified or explained, and it is always necessary to either arrive at a fundamental explanation of the system, or be resigned not to understand it at all ? He is too ready to think that all can be remedied by proclaiming the patriotism of the Florentine Secretary. But this is an elusion of the problem, not a solution.

Machiavelli, continues Gervinus, confined his investigations to the principality and the republic, because, in his opinion, these two were the only efficient forms of government. Furthermore, he was convinced that a vitiated nation can only be reformed by violent means. And as Italian affairs were going to ruin, and popular government had almost everywhere become an impossibility, the sole means of salvation for the country was offered by the government of a prince, which he therefore recommended, although making exception in favour of Florence, where, as is evidenced by his address to Leo X., he wished republican institutions to be preserved. And here the German critic is at one with Machiavelli, because, like the latter, he discerned throughout history a general law, according to which government passes from the rule of one individual to that of several, and thence to that of many, afterwards recurring to a limited number, and then again to an autocrat.[1] And if in Italy, where the democracy was deeply

[1] Gervinus repeated and defended this theory in his "Introduction to the History of the Nineteenth Century," that made so much sensation in its time. See on this head the critical essay of Professor K Hillebrand, in his "Zeiten, Volker und Menschen," vol. ii. Berlin, Oppenheim, 1875 Hillebrand has a profound knowledge of Italian literature, and has also written some excellent pages upon Machiavelli, in his " tudes historiques et litteraires." Paris, Franch, 1868.

generation he sought by recurrence to Roman customs. There was one flaw in his intellect, according to Gervinus, and this was caused by his ignorance of Greek literature, and by having formed his taste and trained his mind upon Roman history and literature. His ignorance of the epopœa, tragedy, and lyric poetry of Greece, his scanty knowledge and slight appreciation of the true spirit of Christianity and the Reformation, deprived him of love for every true and lofty poetic ideal, and for all the arts and sciences outside the limits of politics. This occasioned his tendency to examine the outer rather than the inner aspect of things and events, and hence to always attribute the causes of great political revolutions to some exterior or negative cause rather than to any inner national impulse or necessity. According to Machiavelli, aristocracy came into being as a reaction against the oppression exercised by a tyrant; democracy as a reaction against the overwhelming and despotic power of the aristocracy. Thus nothing was caused by an intimate need, nor by an irresistible impulse towards liberty. And hereupon Gervinus undertakes to discover the same fault in the "Histories" of Machiavelli, and throughout the whole of his works, rather than in the history and character of the Latin nation in general.

It is very strange, however, that Gervinus should have failed to perceive that the very theory of the succession of governments, that serves as the peg for the whole of his criticism, and that he attributes to the Florentine's lack of acquaintance with Greek authors, was not of Machiavelli's invention, but taken by him root and branch from the Greeks. We have noted elsewhere that this theory is almost a literal translation from Polybius, and this the German critic should have known, since others had already called attention to the fact. Indeed, he might also have seen that the lofty idealism, the intimate feeling, as the Germans express it, the absence of which he censured in Machiavelli, was present in Dante, who knew no Greek; began to diminish in Petrarca, one of the first to study that tongue; and diminished still more in Boccaccio and among the learned men, in proportion with increased knowledge of Greek. This fact was certainly no result of knowledge of Greek, but the historic evolution of the Italian mind, and altogether peculiar to the Renaissance spirit, which mainly sought in Grecian literature and antiquity outer beauty of form and a way of escape from scholasticism, leading towards the world of reality. Whether for good or evil, this tendency was peculiar to the age and to the Italy of that age, and contributed in no slight degree towards the creation of the science of politics which is mainly applied to the outer aspect and actual results of human deeds.

unrecognised, and hear doubts thrown upon the integrity of his political character and morality, then I am forced to echo his laments upon times in which there is no strength for magnanimous enterprise, no real persistence in study, no intelligence of the great exemplars of history." [1]

There is undoubtedly much sincere enthusiasm in all this, but there is also a certain share of nineteenth-century political rhetoric and modern political feeling. The patriot comes to the front even where only the voice of the critic should be heard. Accordingly there was some reason in the remark made even in Germany, that Gervinus was precisely one of those who connected Machiavelli on the one hand too closely with his times, and on the other not closely enough Not closely enough when forgetful that the political thinker, even when engaged in abstract definitions of general laws, is forced to conceive them as within the boundaries of the culture of his own nation and his own age. It was therefore impossible for Machiavelli, in his own age of turmoil, to know and invoke a princely government of the lawful and temperate description familiar to our times. To attribute to him the aspirations felt by Germany and Italy in the years preceding their national reconstitution, only confers upon him a physiognomy totally different from his own. Then, again, it is connecting Machiavelli too closely with his times to present his most general theories as results of his personal feelings and patriotism, whereas they have certainly a scientific and independent value as well. For it is this value that the critic should seek to know and define with exactitude

During a political state of things very little different from that of Germany at the same period, a work appeared in Italy, in 1840, by Professor Andrea Zambelli, entitled, "Considerations on the Book of the 'Prince,'" [2] which is undoubtedly the best Italian study that has been written on the "Prince." Zambelli was a man of superior talent and learning, well versed in modern history and the literatures of foreign countries, and had given intelligent and industrious study to the works of Machiavelli, for whom he had a genuine admiration. In his "Considerations" he enters on a long train of argument against Macaulay, in order to prove that not only were Italy and her political system corrupt, but that very great corruption existed throughout Europe during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. And Zambelli frequently

[1] Gervinus, *op cit*, pp 159, 160

[2] ' Le Considerazioni sul libro del Principe," Milan, Pirola, 1840 Afterwards reprinted, together with the "Prince" and the "Discourses" of Machiavelli. Florence, Le Monnier, 1857.

corrupted, and the aristocracy opposed the greatest obstacle to every improvement, princely government was in Machiavelli's opinion the only possible resource,[1] so too, according to Gervinus, "a corrupt multitude can only be regenerated by force, as is shown by the continual examples of modern history. The "Prince," adds Gervinus, "gives us the portrait of an armed legislator who cannot be really bad, but neither can afford to be scrupulous: it is sufficient for him to avoid wanton wickedness without being able to strictly observe the rules of every day morality."[2] Necessity knows no law, and great men have always considered themselves in the light of lesser divinities. In all this Machiavelli has keenly examined and comprehended the laws of history and society, and always in the purest spirit of patriotism.

However, according to Gervinus, there is one patent reason why the writings of Machiavelli were never thoroughly, or at best, only half understood; and that is because after-events have as yet demonstrated no more than half the truth of his doctrines. "Posterior ages fought energetically against the revived absolutism of the Renaissance, but they failed to see how and why it had become a necessity. This was clearly understood by Machiavelli alone; hence the height of his genius will be comprehended by coming generations, when, the conflict in which we are now engaged being at an end, they will recognise in the hour of victory that they could never have attained to the advantages within their grasp had not the struggle been provoked by the existence of despotism. It is certain that so long as men are crying out in defence of the rights of the people, and struggling against tyrants, it is impossible to understand, much less be favourable to one whose writings furnished the rules followed by Charles V., Henry III, and Sixtus V. In better times, however, it will be easy to think kindly of the great man who dared to prophecy the truth, and who veritably succeeded, whether he did or did not manifest that intention, in teaching princes how to oppress nations, and in teaching nations how to cast off the yoke imposed upon them; or, to quote the words of Bernardo di Giunta, taught at the same time the use of remedies and of poisons.

"It may be," says Gervinus, in conclusion, "that I aim at a higher ideal than any reached by Machiavelli; but when I see this writer so scantily appreciated on the very points to which he devoted his life and his noble intellect; when I see that the historical and political truths discovered by him are still

[1] Gervinus, "Historische Schriften," p. 142

[2] Ibid., p. 155.

general axioms of government for the maintenance of States, whether republican or monarchial, at all times and in all places. Zambelli, who examined the "Prince" alone, does not seem to be aware of this, and therefore explains everything by the light of the times and the patriotism of his author, thus proving himself rather a learned and patriotic apologist than an independent critic or impartial judge.

In short, therefore, after a comprehensive examination of the works of Macaulay, Gervinus, and Zambelli, we cannot fail to acknowledge that an enormous progress has been made in pursuance of those precepts of historical criticism, of which Ranke was one of the chief imitators in Germany. But, on the other hand, there has been a tendency towards a strangely exaggerated pretence of explaining everything by the times, and a renewal of the no less strange attempt to justify all things by patriotism. It is rightly observed by Mohl at the beginning of his bibliographical work, that in any study upon Machiavelli it is necessary to accurately define not only that which is to be thought of his character as a man, but also what judgment is to be passed upon his doctrines, and how it is to be explained that so great a writer could expound and maintain precepts so entirely opposed to goodness. Even Mohl considers that the moral question is only to be explained by the corruption of the times;[1] but although, he adds, the times teach us to understand how Machiavelli arrived at immoral doctrines, they fail to show us why he was compelled to arrive at them, inasmuch as a great man rises above his age and raises his age with him. Hence it is clear that any explanation derived from the times is insufficient, at least from this point of view; and therefore even the judgment pronounced by Mohl ends in a sentence of condemnation

This learned critic in fact goes on to say: It must be kept in mind that in the "Prince" Machiavelli proposed a problem peculiar to his time, and that even in the "Discourses" he is always thinking of a free Italian State, and constantly keeps it in view. Therefore he should not be judged as if writing and speaking in the abstract for all time. Nevertheless, the question is still forced upon us: What is the intrinsic value of his works? There are certain of Machiavelli's utterances unquestionably denoting a deep knowledge of mankind and the world. He has an excellent method, nor, since Aristotle, was there ever seen the like of it. All this, if not yet a science, constituted the conditions, or it may

[1] "Eine Erklarung ist moglich, aber nur auf eine einzige Weise. Machiavell muss in seiner Zeit begriffen und als ein Erzeugniss derselben betrachtet werden; (Mohl, *op cit*, p 537).

succeeds in proving his case, even in the opinion of foreign critics. Unfortunately, however, he falls into exaggeration of an opposite kind, as, for example, in unduly attenuating the crimes and iniquities of Alexander VI. and of Cæsar and Lucretia Borgia. Notwithstanding this, his description of the times is on the whole sufficiently faithful, and he gives a lucid picture of the enormous difficulties in the way of the Italian princes and tyrants, who, being involved in continual warfare with everything and everybody, were obliged to pursue the only morality possible in an almost anarchical state of things.

The centralization requisite for escape from the Middle Ages, the formation of new States and nations, could only be obtained by means of these tyrants The counsels offered to them by Machiavelli, and the precepts expounded in his works, were the best which could then be given, and which, when followed, achieved the desired end. But now even Zambelli does his utmost to soften the effect of the Machiavellian maxims, by carefully selecting those devoted to the praise of virtue, national liberty, and independence. The constant aim of his work is the endeavour to prove that Machiavelli desired a united, free, and independent Italy, and that he discovered and promoted the sole means having then any chance of success. But how was it that he was at one moment in favour of a republic, and the next of a monarchy? He sought that which was possible. He knew Cæsar Borgia, and found in him his ideal. On Cæsar's death he recurred to the Republic, his love for which was based upon the closest conviction; when the Republic was extinguished, he turned to the Medici and wrote the "Prince," hoping that the unity of Italy would be the outcome of a monarchy. And as to the means proposed by Machiavelli for the accomplishment of his scheme, Zambelli, as we have seen, does all in his power to attenuate their cruelty and violence, and seeks out earlier examples tending to justify them to some degree, and even making reference to the Scriptures, where, as he says, certain precepts are inculcated which, if found in the "Discourses" or the "Prince," would have aroused more censure than any therein contained.

This author's defence of Machiavelli rests chiefly upon two points. The system of politics counselled in the "Prince," although an impossible system at the present day, when it would be revolting to the public conscience, was the only system possible at that time, the best that could be pursued, and was therefore accepted and urged by Machiavelli for the liberation of his country. But it is undeniable that he also expounded certain

Sybel's historical review, comprising some very opportu reflections upon the Machiavelli question, as he calls it, and t manner in which it should be treated. Nowadays, he says, t Machiavelli question has entered upon a new phase. Formerl it implied an investigation of the author's moral feeling. present the chief point is to ascertain his political purpose. Th is why he has been credited with so many modern ideas, or least, ideas cast in a modern mould. But Machiavelli will be better understood when a clear distinction is drawn between conception as a scholar of the laws of politics in general, a as a citizen and patriot, of the destinies of his own countr It will then be recognized that in the former attitude he gave more than the logical and accurate result of historic absolutism, it is seen at this day, and in the second was unable to foresee t modern solution of the national problem upon the German pla It is imperative to distinguish between the product of Machi velli's own brain, inevitably bearing, even if only as an accesso the stamp of his time, and the patriotic desires and feelings whi were the actual and substantial outcome of the time in which, a for which, he lived.[1]

After making these reflections, the author proceeds to inqu into the nature of Machiavelli's patriotic aims. But in this he scarcely successful, for he positively attempts to prove Machiave a federalist. In his opinion the Florentine prince was to be simp the chief of the confederation,[2] a form of government for whic as we have already seen, Machiavelli had not the slightest sy pathy. For he had explicitly declared that he only considered acceptable in certain exceptional cases, namely, when there was hope of anything better. He might advise it for a small Sta like Tuscany, but never proposed it for Italy, a country th according to his views, could only attain to unity and power means of the monarchy.

Herr Feuerlein then proceeds to point out, with the brevi imposed by the limits of his essay, what was Machiavelli's scienti merit, what the value of his doctrines, and what the amou of novelty enunciated in them. Machiavelli discerned that t State has a definite aim of its own, and that there is unity social aims. For him the State signified an end, not a means; was an organism, allowing no obstacles to impede its developme to which, indeed, everything must be subordinated. For us, the contrary, the State is only one of the many forms of o

[1] Feuerlein, *op. cit.*, pp. 3, 4.

[2] "Eine Art Richtergewalt im alttestamentlichen Sinne" (Feuerlein, *cit.*, p. 7).

be said, the foundations required to create one. Machiavelli, however, ignored the profound difference between the ancient and the modern State, and thus his doctrines have become anachronisms.[1] Besides, he had too great a contempt for men, and believed that they could only be improved by force. And this was a second and very serious mistake, giving rise to a policy of violence that took no account of the noblest part of man. Even if his counsels be regarded as only given with a view to special times and conditions, it is an enduring truth that cunning and fraud are never successful in the long run. However wicked men may be, they are alarmed by similar maxims, distrust, and finally reduce them to impotence. And it is another mistake to believe that by violence a degraded people may be made fit for liberty. There would have been a greater probability of seeing Italians sink to a lower depth of corruption by pursuing the counsels of Machiavelli, and accordingly farther removed than ever from the proposed end. So, in conclusion, the intrinsic value of the doctrines amounted to very little. They are fragments of a system with scarcely any coherence; and, indeed, according to Mohl, Machiavelli himself is no more than a fragment, the torso as it were of a great man, a standing example and warning to all of the false road by which he had strayed.[2]

Thus, in the course of these short remarks, Mohl recurs, although with considerable gentleness, and very considerable learning, to the purely historical explanation, to the criticism and moral condemnation of Machiavelli. And this has been, more or less, the course always pursued. After so much study, so much research,[3] constantly multiplied of late years, the intrinsic value of the ideas, works, and character of Machiavelli has been once more put in doubt. While some writers have persistently explained everything by the times, justified everything by patriotism, others, in the name of morality, have continued to pass a sentence of condemnation, that, however qualified, has been invariably most severe.

In 1868, Herr Emil Feuerlein published a paper[4] in Professor

[1] "Von Anfang an ein Anachronismus war" (*Op cit.*, p 540)

[2] "Er ist eine Warnung für alle Zeiten; ein betrubendes Beispiel einer vortrefflich angelegten aber unvollkommen ausgebildeten Natur; ein machtiges aber verstummeltes Bruchstuck eines grossen Mannes" (Mohl, *op. cit*, p. 541)

[3] Let us again mention, among recent German works, that of Dr. Th Mundt: "Niccolò Machiavelli und das System der modernen Politik." Dritte neu bearbeitete Ausgabe. Berlin, Yanke, 1867.

[4] "Zur Machiavelli Frage," von Emil Feuerlein. "Historische Zeitschrift, hersusgegeben von H. von Sybel," Anno (1868), No 1, Munchen, Literarisch-Artistische Anstalt.

We may conclude that although Machiavelli has now been studied more or less from every point of view, the contradictions of his writings have not yet been cleared away, nor has any judgment yet passed upon him been generally received as a final sentence. The principal reason of this is, that even writers of the greatest influence have almost always studied him under some one alone of his manifold aspects. This writer has sought the solution of the enigma in examination of the times; another in the character of the man; others, again, have limited their investigations to his works, and only beheld in them the republican or the monarchist; while some have perceived nothing but the political question, and others almost suppressed it in favour of the moral question. Examined from any one of these exclusive points of view, Machiavelli's aspect is changed, and his true character is left unexplained and unintelligible. Nothing but a thorough examination of Machiavelli under all his numerous aspects—in other words, nothing short of an ample and detailed biography can really bring us nearer to the difficult goal. Some attempts of this kind have certainly been made. The first of them, however, were decided failures, owing to their neglect of various monographs throwing a new light on this or that part of the theme. Monsieur Périès prefaced his translation of the complete works of Machiavelli (1823–26) by a "Histoire de Machiavel,"[1] that, although a genuine biography, was merely compiled from Baldelli's "Elogio," and from the prefaces to the Florentine editions of the "Opere," published in 1782 and 1796; and of the later Italian edition of 1813. The year 1833 saw the appearance of the two stout volumes by Monsieur Artaud, to which frequent reference is made in these pages While giving evidence of much patience and perseverance on the part of their author, these volumes lack originality, both in historic research and the conclusions arrived at with regard to the works For many years afterwards no one attempted to write a biography of Machiavelli, for that title can scarcely be accorded to a book by Herr Mundt, mainly composed of a series of reflections upon the works and doctrines of the Florentine Secretary. The centenary of Machiavelli, celebrated in Florence in the year 1869, and the prize offered for competition on that occasion, led to the publication of many Italian works upon Machiavelli, among which were included four new biographies. From motives easily understood by the reader, we refrain from all mention of these more

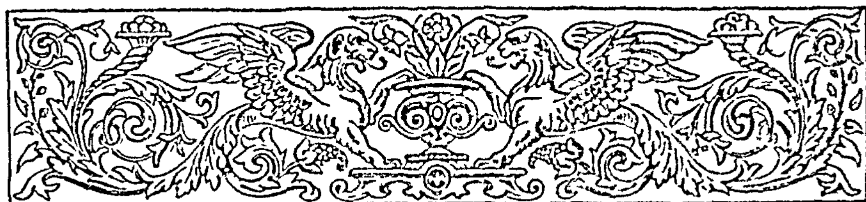
[1] The translation of the "Opere" in twelve volumes was published by Michaud, Paris, 1823–26. The "Histoire de Machiavel" occupies half the first volume, 288 pages.

social life; other forms have equal rights to existence, and their manifold inter-relations are regulated by public rights. Machiavelli discovered that the Middle Ages were involved in a chaos of special institutions, and were always in confusion; he was the first man daring to declare that the society to which we all belong can have only one aim. Living in an age when the ancient, mediæval divisions of Church and State, republics and associations, feudalism and free companies, were either already disappearing or about to disappear, he rejected and condemned, at once and for ever, all that stood in the way of the unity of the State. In fact, the formula leading from the mediæval chaos to the juridical order of modern times precisely consisted in reducing different aims to the one fixed aim of the State, that Machiavelli was the first to divine and make known to the world. This, however, being a *formula*, is likewise an abstraction, tending to a mechanical scheme, rather than to the ample, natural, organic, and free development of the varied culture and general conscience of society.

He was urged upon this path by his remembrance of the ancient unity of the Roman State that he sought to reproduce. But with him, as with the Reformation, it came about that, in endeavouring to repeat the past a new future was produced. The "Prince" treats of the monarchy, the "Discourses" of the republic; but the idea of a State autonomy and its exclusive aim is common to both works. Machiavelli studied these two forms of government, as two facts existing in the past and the present; but in his ignorance of the means by which monarchy can co-exist with the liberty of the people, as well as of those that, by separating the executive from the legislative power, confer stability upon the republic, his monarchy is naturally harsh and despotic, while his republic allows undue license to the people.[1]

But the abstract philosophical tone of Herr Feuerlein's exposition fails to give the true character of Machiavelli's writings, for Machiavelli conceived every idea in a concrete and almost personal shape. Besides, he was, as Herr Feuerlein himself remarks, the most objective of writers, so that the events he relates seem to live in his pages, and hence the marvellous force of his style. Now this concrete objectiveness is Machiavelli's prominent characteristic, and continually leads him to expound his theories in the form of precepts and counsels for the guidance of statesmen, and at every step places the moral question before us, side by side with the political question. The latter is certainly the main point, but the former cannot be so entirely suppressed, as Herr Feuerlein seems to wish.

[1] Feuerlein, *op. cit.*, *passim.*



CHAPTER VI.

Leo X., his Court and his Policy.



EFORE continuing our examination of Machiavelli's works, it is necessary to revert to the history of his times, with which they are so closely connected. The accession of Leo X. to the Papal throne had been welcomed with the highest hopes, and particularly in Italy. The world was weary of the scandalous excesses of Alexander VI. and of the restless daring of Julius II. It yearned for a little rest and peace; therefore Cardinal Giovanni dei Medici seemed to be the Pope demanded by all. Vettori tells us that "he had played his part so well, as to be deemed a man of exemplary life." [1] It is certain that he had a fair general reputation; but he was also known to be very shrewd and adroit in the guidance and management of men. In politics he belonged to the school of his father, Lorenzo the Magnificent, for while very ambitious of power for himself and his family, he veiled his intent beneath a great show of kindliness and simplicity, and always adopted what, in Florentine parlance, were called civil methods. Nevertheless, he was quite able, on emergency, not only to lie and cheat, and almost take pride in so doing, but even to stain his hands with blood. He had a great and well-deserved reputation for liberality with his purse. In fact, he was not only lavish of that which he had, but of that which he had not. "It was no more possible," Vettori

[1] "Sommario della Storia d'Italia," in the "Archivio Storico," Appendix, No. 22, p. 297.

recent works, and especially from all criticism on the biographies. This chapter is dedicated to a more limited theme, and has already greatly exceeded its due amount of space.[1]

[1] Among the works published during our own time in Italy, the chapter upon Machiavelli in the "Storia di Letteratura Italiana" of Professor De Sanctis is worthy of special notice. Both in this and the essay by the same author, entitled "L'uomo del Guicciardini," many original remarks are to be found. Monsieur Tréverret has devoted considerable space to Machiavelli in his volume "L'Italie au XVI Siècle," 1st series, Paris, Hachette, 1877. And a very great number of pamphlets, magazine articles, addresses, and studies of every size and kind have recently appeared upon Machiavelli. We are careful to mention those of which we make use. Professor U. A. Canello also speaks at length of Machiavelli in his "Storia della Letteratura Italiana nel Secolo XVI." (Milan, Vallardi, 1880), a work that has only recently come under our notice.

As to the more recent biographies, the first to appear was the "Machiavelli e i suoi tempi" of Signor Carlo Gioda. Florence Barbèra, 1874 It is principally devoted to the exposition of the Machiavellian doctrines. The following year appeared the work of Signor Gaspar Amico, "La Vita di Niccolò Machiavelli, Commentari Storico-Critici." Florence, Civelli, 1875 At a later date Signor Francesco Nitti brought out the first volume of another biography, entitled "Machiavelli nella Vita e nelle Opere, studiato da Francesco Nitti." Naples, Detken, and Rocholl, 1876. This volume gives the narrative of Machiavelli's life down to 1512, but does not treat of his works. The second volume has not yet appeared, we believe. Finally, Signor Francesco Mordenti has issued a work entitled, "Diario di Niccolò Machiavelli." Florence, Printing Office of the "Gazzetta d'Italia," 1880. This book is chiefly a collection of notices upon the life of Machiavelli.

It is right to add that all these works make reference to the new edition of the "Works of Machiavelli," commenced by Messrs L. Passerini and Fanfani in 1873 (Florence, the Cenniana Printing Office), and afterwards continued by Messrs. L Passerini and G Milanesi down to the sixth volume issued in 1877. This edition has been interrupted since the death of Signor Passerini. It comprises the "Storie" and the "Legazioni," many documents, and especially many letters addressed by the Florentine Government to Machiavelli during the latter's absence on political missions. As we have elsewhere noted, the documents are not all of equal value, some being altogether useless, while others are of great service to the biographer. Unfortunately these volumes have been carelessly revised.

was for some time held among them by Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena, the noted author of that scandalous comedy, "La Calandria" But although a scapegrace, he was nevertheless well versed in public affairs, had been very zealous in promoting the Pope's election, and was speedily recompensed by a Cardinal's hat. His enjoyment of it was brief; his health was already undermined; soon the suspicion of having intrigued with France deprived him of favour, and when his death took place not long after, he was said to have died by poison.

Leo X. was only happy when surrounded by these prelates, his poets and his artists; and he revealed his true nature and expressed his genuine sentiments when, on meeting his brother Giuliano, shortly after his election, he said to him: "Let us enjoy the papacy, since God has given it to us"[1] To enjoy life, less sensually than æsthetically, was the chief aim of his desires. "He wants neither wars nor troubles," wrote the Venetian Ambassador, Marin Giorgi.[2] "He thought of everything excepting war,"[3] wrote the Florentine Ambassador, Francesco Vettori. Yet while sacrificing everything to his beloved pleasures, and therefore really desirous of peace, he was always at war, and kept the whole of Italy in continual agitation.

For being always in need of large funds for his Court, his pleasures and entertainments, his literati and artists, and even for his buffoons, he tried to obtain supplies in many different ways, and these ways often gave rise to dissensions ending in warfare. Thus he speedily cast a covetous eye on the territories of Cervia and Ravenna, yielding a yearly revenue of fifty thousand ducats from salt, and thereby aroused the suspicions of the Venetians to whom they belonged[4] He also ardently desired to win fame, longed to be regarded as a power in Italy, and above all had a keen and unresting resolve to aggrandize the whole of his family. "The Pope and his Medici," wrote the Venetian Ambassador, "have no other thought than of increasing the fortunes of their house; and his nephews, unsatisfied with dukedoms, pretend that one of them ought to be a king."[5]

We have already related how these desires constantly tended towards the projected foundation of a North Italian State, to consist of Modena and Parma, and be afterwards extended to Ferrara

[1] Albèri, "Relazione" of Marin Giorgi, p. 52.
[2] Ibid, p. 51.
[3] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 322.
[4] Albèri, "Relazione" (already cited), p 51.
[5] Ibid., "Relazione," quoted above, p. 45. Marin Giorgi wrote this Report in 1517.

tells us, "for his Holiness to keep a thousand ducats, than for a stone to fly upwards of itself." [1] Were the doors of the Pantheon made of gold, the Pope would never be able to leave them untouched," [2] said one of the Venetian ambassadors. And it was added by another, that besides his inability to keep account of money, the crowd of Florentines about him, claiming to be relations, stripped him of every soldo; and for this reason were greatly hated at Court.[3] Nor less considerable was his reputation as a great Mæcenas, a patron and cultivator of letters and all the fine arts. The palace at St. Eustachio,[4] his residence while a Cardinal, speedily became a pleasant resort for artists and literati. It was also a museum, and served for the reception of the Medicean library, purchased by the Cardinal in 1508 from the friars of St. Mark, by whom it had been acquired in Savonarola's time.[5]

Leo X. was of middle height, with a large head, a reddish complexion, and projecting eyes; he was so short-sighted as to be always obliged to use glasses, was extremely proud of his beautiful hands, which he never forgot to exhibit, and prouder still of his voice, which was equally melodious in speech and song. He suffered much from a disease that made it unpleasant to approach him; he was very corpulent, and unable to endure any prolonged fatigue. All the courtier poets were loud in their praise of his Latin verses, which were very poor stuff, although improvised with much facility; he won general applause and admiration by his singing, his discussions on painting, sculpture, and music, and his conversation on all subjects. But in reality he never succeeded in producting anything original. He was an accomplished *dilettante*, a great lover of art and literature, but he was nothing more And in this he clearly showed his inferiority to his father, who undoubtedly left his individual stamp on the literature of his time.

Before the Conclave that elected him was dissolved, the Pope had already made choice of his two secretaries. These were, the Venetian, Pietro Bembo, a learned Latinist, an elegant Italian writer, a lover of the fair sex and of gay life, and Giovanni Sadoleto, another erudite Latinist, a wit and devoted to pleasure and brilliant society. All the other prelates the Pope collected about him were more or less of the same stamp. A prominent place

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," p 322.

[2] Albéri, "Relazioni degli Ambasciatori Veneti," series 2, vol. iii.; "Relazione" by Marin Giorgi, p 56.

[3] Ibid., "Relazioni," &c, *vol cit.*; "Relazione," by Marco Minio, p. 63.

[4] Afterwards known as the Palazzo Madama, from having been inhabited by Caterina dei Medici, before she went to France. It is now occupied by the Italian Senate.

[5] It was afterwards retransferred to Florence.

Pope only turned him to account as a useful and docile instrument of his own will. To avoid fatigue he always made great use of others; but always wished everything to be done in his own way, and to achieve his own ends, no matter by what means.

It was his misfortune to have mounted the pontifical throne at a moment when Europe was racked by the bloody contests and rivalries of divers great potentates; at a moment when the first stirrings of religious reform were beginning to be felt; when Italy was a prey to the French and Spaniards contending for mastery over her, and alternately summoning other foreigners to their assistance. The aim of Leo X was to become supreme arbiter of the general policy of Europe. The authority of the Church, the family prestige, and singular good fortune that had so far attended him, certainly placed him in a very lofty position, and caused many to hope that, as his father had been styled the balancing needle of Italy, so he might be arbiter in the great political struggles of Europe. To effect this end, however, his conduct should have been constantly governed by some noble aim and genuine political creed. Instead, he nearly always allowed himself to be ruled by purely personal and often unworthy aims.

Indifferent to religion, it was impossible for him to form the most distant idea of the real nature of the Reformation; ambitious in politics, he only sought to increase his revenues, his State, and the power of his house. To these ends he sacrificed everything, making and unmaking alliances, frankly declaring it to be a maxim of the true statesman never to remain faithful to a single alliance, but instantly to conclude another with some prince hostile to the first, in order to be prepared for every contingency.[1] Thus, his policy was a succession of continual, interminable changes, a labyrinth impenetrable to all who cannot discern that its sole clue consists in the personal interests of the Pope and his irresistible craving for the aggrandizement of his kindred

It is easy to conceive the fatal results brought upon Italy by the policy of a man such as this No sooner was Julius II dead, than General Cardona seized on Parma and Piacenza in behalf of the Duchy of Milan. The lord of that State, Massimiliano Sforza, held little more than a nominal authority, and being a weak and inexperienced youth, was a puppet in the hands of Swiss, Spaniards, and Emperor, to the extreme vexation of his Secretary, Girolamo Morone, who was, on the contrary, a man of wide capacity, restless and audacious temper, and always bent upon daring designs. The Pope, being cruelly hurt by the loss of the

[1] Alberi, "Relazioni," series 2nd, vol III. "Relazione" of Antonio Soriano, p. 290.

and Urbino, the which plan naturally led to conflict with the Este and Della Rovere. As we have seen, it was this project that first suggested to Machiavelli the idea of the "Prince," in which he counselled the Medici to extend their rule over the whole of Italy, to unite it and organize its forces. Nevertheless, the Pope's original intention had been to bestow the new kingdom upon his nephew Lorenzo, and, on the supposition of being able to take advantage of the inevitable confusion in Italy, to seize the Neapolitan State for his brother Giuliano. Soon discovering the impossiblity of carrying out this second and more daring design, he determined to give Modena and Parma to Giuliano. But this brother, a man of fantastic and honest disposition, died in 1516, and thus there only remained Lorenzo, aged twenty-one years, and who, according to the Venetian Ambassador, "was of a bold temperament, shrewd, fitted for great deeds, and if not equal to Valentinois very little behind him."[1] Lorenzo continually spurred on the Pope, and all the more because he was by no means content to remain in Florence, where his authority was rather nominal than real.

There was also another Medici of riper years and stronger influence, Giulio (1478–1534), natural son of the Giuliano murdered in the conspiracy of the Pazzi. This Giulio, born shortly after his father's death, and afterwards very notorious in the world as Pope Clement VII., had early adopted the ecclesiastical career, was a Knight of Rhodes, an assiduous courtier to Cardinal Giovanni, and increasingly assiduous after the latter became Pope Leo X. He had played a very active part in the plot that drove Soderini from Florence, and was shortly after nominated Archbishop of that city. Nor did much time pass before he was raised to the purple, after a false preliminary declaration of his legitimacy, managed in the same manner practised by Alexander VI. on Cæsar Borgia's behalf. Hats were conferred at the same time upon Bernardo da Bibbiena, the Datary Lorenzo Pucci, and Innocenzo Cibo, the son of the Pope's sister. And this was Leo X.'s first step in the violation of his oaths, the first thing to damage the good opinion formerly conceived of him. Cardinal Giulio was employed in all affairs of importance, and held to be a man of great sagacity, and not merely adviser but almost leader to the Pope.[2] For being much less devoted to pleasure, less desirous of playing the Mæcenas, he was able to work hard and without allowing himself to be distracted from business. But in truth the

[1] Albéri, "Relazione," above quoted, by Giorgi, pp. 51, 52.
[2] Ibid, the above-quoted "Relazione": Giorgi's, p. 52, and Marco Minio's, p. 65.

in negotiating an agreement between the Empire, Spain, Venice, Florence, and Milan, in order, after his usual fashion, to keep the road open for turning this way or that, as circumstances might require. "Full of devices," so wrote Guicciardini,[1] "for while on the one hand he had no wish that the King of France should recover the Milanese State, on the other he tried to conciliate him and the other potentates as much as possible, by divers tricks" Hence it is impossible to keep pace with his innumerable tergiversations. He made treaties with all and was faithful to none, because none would give him the promises and guarantees required to forward his designs on the Neapolitan kingdom and Upper Italy. Yet all were cognisant of these ambitious schemes of his.[2] When it was seen that the Pope permitted the Florentines to attack the Lucchese; and that instead of giving up Reggio, according to his sworn promise, he purchased Modena from the Emperor for 44,000 ducats, all penetrated the nature of his designs in that quarter. Sienna, Ferrara, Urbino, dreaded that at any moment they might find themselves caught in the meshes of the Holy Father's intrigues, and thus he was naturally the object of universal mistrust.

But now the direction of European affairs was changed by a novel event On the death of his wife Anne, Louis XII. had espoused the Princess Mary, sister of King Henry VIII., and she was so young and beautiful that ill-natured tongues declared that King Louis had brought from England a "hackney of so swift a pace that in a few months it carried him out of the world."[3] In fact, being of a sickly habit, and fifty-three years of age, whereas his wife was only sixteen, his strength was unequal to the weight of his new happiness, and he expired on the first day of the year 1515.

His successor, Francis I., was only twenty years of age, was enthusiastic for the memory of Gaston de Foix, and burning to avenge the defeats of Novara and Guinegatte. During the past year he had taken to wife the eldest daughter of King Louis, heiress through her mother to the Duchy of Brittany, and inheriting her father's pretended claims on that of Milan. He was of lofty stature, handsome, and robust, of chivalric, pleasure-loving temperament, literary tastes, and a mind alike capable of the conception and execution of daring designs. And together with the French crown he also assumed the title of Duke of Milan, and made preparations for an Italian campaign. To this

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. vi. p 31; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. i p. 175 and fol.

[2] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," pp. 20–31.

[3] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 303.

two cities, upon which he had so firmly counted for his kinsmen, immediately began to weave fresh intrigues. Invited to ally himself with France, who in March, 1515, had leagued with Venice for the attack of Milan, he refused consent, because the restoration of Parma and Piacenza was not guaranteed to him.[1] On the other hand he feigned an inclination to join the league arranged in April, at Mechlin, between Henry VIII. and the Emperor, for the defence of Milan and the States of the Church, and for the attack upon France. Meanwhile, Girolamo Morone had hastened to Rome to obtain supplies for his lord's defence, and the Pope, without as yet coming to any decision, gave him funds for the hire of Swiss troops. War broke out immediately. The French poured in on one side, the Venetians advanced on another, and Milan rose in revolt against the Duke, who, with only Como and Novara left in his possession, shut himself up in the latter city. Then, however, the Swiss poured down from their mountain passes, signally defeated the French at Riotta in the month of June, and thus brought about a change in the face of affairs Cardona, in fact, as the representative of Spain, was the first to join the League of Mechlin, and handed over Parma and Piacenza to the Pope, who then naturally gave in his adhesion also. The Spaniards instantly hurried to attack the Venetians, and approached very near to the lagoons. In October, at Motta, he gave battle to Alviano, who had been released by the French, and routed his army. At the same time France lost Genoa, was assailed at home by the English and Imperial forces, and defeated by them at Guinegatte (16th August, 1513). The Swiss also marched into France on the Dijon side; but La Trémoille, by means of gold and golden promises, succeeded in inducing them to retire from Milan.

Now at last Louis XII. discovered that it would be to his interest to join with the Pope, who had the power of raising up so many enemies against him. He therefore renounced the *Conciliabolo*, already commenced at Pisa, and subjected the Gallican Church to the authority of the Lateran Council. In this manner a new treaty was speedily concluded between the Pope, France, and England. Leo X., therefore, now found himself allied with the French, who had been constantly adverse to his house; indeed, it was exactly at that moment that he entered into relationship with King Louis XII. by the marriage of Philiberte of Savoy with Giuliano dei Medici, and promised to send the latter to aid in the retaking of Milan. Meanwhile, he was already secretly engaged

[1] Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol viii. p. 23; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V," vol. i. p 163.

the best possible terms for the Pope from the winning side; and this, as was natural, proved highly injurious to the conduct of the war.[1]

On September 13, 1515, the two armies met in pitched battle at Marignano. The Swiss, in three divisions of eight or ten thousand men each, made a vigorous and successful attack upon the French men-at-arms, and were preparing as usual to hurl themselves on the artillery, when Francis I. charged at the head of his guard, and carrying on the struggle far into the night, the fate of the day was left undecided. He then ordered Alviano to advance with his Venetians; despatched messages to some other generals, and having rested for a few hours leaning against a cannon, renewed the fight at dawn. The battle raged fiercely, and seemed to be turning in favour of the Swiss, when the arrival of Alviano, and his onslaught to the cry of "*Viva San Marco!*" compelled them to give way. They made one last and desperate effort and then beat a retreat, leaving from seven to eight thousand dead on the field. And this fight, termed by the war-experienced Trivulzio, "the battle of the giants," entirely destroyed the prestige so long enjoyed by the Swiss, who were never again held to be invincible, as in former times. Nevertheless, they executed their retreat-operations in admirable order; left several thousand men in the fortress of Milan, and went back to their mountains threatening to return to take revenge at some future opportunity.

Francis I., who had made Bayard knight him on the battle field, now entered Milan and levied a fine of 300,000 ducats. Soon after, the citadel surrendered in opposition to the advice of Morone, who effected his escape from the hands of the French.[2] Maximilian Sforza, tired of the Swiss and his own bad luck, gave himself up to the king, and withdrawing to France, enjoyed his pension of 36,000 ducats without further troubling himself about anything else. Cardona, digusted with Pope and Florentines,

[1] "And it is said that this army is not there to oppose France, but to obtain better terms" (Marin Sanuto, as quoted in De Leva's "Storia," &c., vol. i. p. 208, note). *Vide* also Capponi's "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," vol. ii. p. 319 and fol.; Francesco Vettori, "Sommario," p. 308

At this juncture the Doge of Genoa, Ottaviano Fregoso, although very friendly with the Pope, who had been his benefactor, made secret terms with France, first deceiving the Pope, and then sending him a lengthy letter, saying that it would have been very difficult for him to justify himself in addressing private individuals or princes who should measure matters of State by private considerations; but that it was positively superfluous to offer excuses in writing to so wise a prince, who, better than all others, would know how much was lawful for the salvation or even aggrandizement of the State. Guicciardini, "Storia di Italia," vol. vi. p. 57.

[2] De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. i p. 214.

end he formed an alliance with the Archduke Charles, renewed the treaty with England, and ratified that already made by Louis XII. with Venice.[1] But it was not possible for him to come to terms with the Pope, inasmuch as the Nuncio Canossa, bishop of Tricarico, an energetic and ready-witted man, not only urged the usual demand for Modena and Parma, but even claimed a promise of the kingdom of Naples. Francis I. almost lost patience at so exorbitant a request. "His Holiness claims too much," he replied, "and hard would it be for us to grant it, without grievously burdening ourselves and the crown. Neither he nor his brother Giuliano would be strong enough to rule and discipline so vast and unquiet a realm that has never long remained subject to one and the same master."[2]

Without losing time the King assembled a powerful army between the Saône, the Rhone, and the Alps, and at last moved towards Italy with 60,000 foot soldiers, 30,000 cavalry, and 72 pieces of artillery. There were the celebrated French men-at-arms, consisting of the highest nobles of the land, and led by the monarch in person. There were many Lansquenets, and many Gascons, and these latter were commanded by Navarro, who had deserted from Spain.[3] Meanwhile, on the 17th July, an armed confederation had been formed by the Emperor, the Catholic king, Sforza, and the Pope, "for the defence and deliverance of Italy." In order to obtain the adhesion of the Pope it had actually been necessary to yield him Parma and Piacenza, and promise to recompense their owner, Sforza, with other lands in exchange. Raymond of Cardona was already at the head of eight or ten thousand Spaniards; the Swiss were marching over the Alpine passes in very large numbers. They had been enrolled by Maximilian Sforza and the Pope, who had engaged to pay them and provide them with an efficient force of cavalry, already organized under the command of Prospero Colonna. Besides this, the Pope had furnished an army of Florentine and pontifical troops, commanded in the first instance by Giuliano, and then, when he was invalided, by Lorenzo dei Medici, with the title of Captain of the Pope and the Florentines. But there was a rumour, soon to be verified, that these had orders not to fight against France in earnest, but only to manœuvre so as to obtain

[1] De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol i. chap. vi.; Mignet, "Rivalité de Francois I. et de Charles-Quint" (Paris, Didier, 1875), vol i. chap. i.

[2] *Vide* "Documenti riguardanti Giuliano dei Medici e il Pontefice Leone X," in the "Archivio Storico," Appendix viii. pp. 310–15

[3] De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. i. p. 207; Mignet, "Rivalité," &c., vol i. p 64.

by which, on payment of 200,000 ducats, Verona was ceded to the Venetians, so that they and the French became masters of Upper Italy. A permanent alliance (Freiburg, November, 29, 1516) was concluded between Francis I. and the thirteen Swiss Cantons, to whom the King disbursed large sums of money. And finally, on March 11, 1517, the League of Cambray was ratified, by which Charles, Maximilian and Francis I. mutually guaranteed their respective dominions. By this means the Archduke, already sovereign of Spain and the Low-Countries, secured his dominion over Naples, and began to prepare the way for his enormous power in the future. But for the moment the world's eye was fixed upon Francis I., who after humiliating the Swiss, had succeeded in gaining their friendship; who had become lord of Milan, and had wrested Verona, the key of Tirol, from the hands of the fantastic and turbulent Emperor; who had obtained guarantees from Germany and Spain for the integrity of his own States, and remained the ally of the Venetians.[1]

Nevertheless, the result of all these labours would have been uncertain and precarious had the king not succeeded in gaining over the Pope, who, if left in opposition, might have again stirred up enemies against him on all sides. Accordingly, negotiations were immediately set on foot, and it was decided that the King and the Pope should meet at Bologna to bring them to a conclusion. Leo X. came to Tuscany towards the end of November, 1515, and to allow time for the completion of the great preparations in Florence for his state reception, he tarried a few days at the villa of the Gianfigliazzi family at Marignolle. On the 30th of the month he entered the city by the San Pier Gattolini gate, of which the outer portion had to be demolished to allow space for the passage of the Pontiff and his numerous suite, comprising eighteen cardinals. He was lodged at Santa Maria Novella, removed the following day to the Medici palace, and started for Bologna on the 3rd December. It is recorded by the chroniclers that Florence employed two thousand workmen for more than a month, and spent over seventy thousand florins in the festivities given on this occasion.[2] The streets and squares through which the Pope was to pass were plenteously decorated with triumphal

[1] Mignet, "Rivalité," &c., vol. i. chap. 1.

[2] Among other accounts *vide* that in the Chronicle of Luca d'Antonio di Luca Landucci, a Florentine grocer, of which a manuscript copy is to be found in the Marucelliana Library (Cod. 26). Signor Del Badia, of the State Archives, is about to edit it, and has collated it with an autographic fragment at Sienna. This Chronicle contains a minute description of these festivities, and also a good deal of information respecting Savonarola. This latter portion has, however, been already brought out in a separate pamphlet by Signor Fanfani.

whose forces had always shilly-shallied, and failed him at every emergency, marched towards Naples. The King halted at Pavia, intending to move thence to take possession of Parma and Piacenza and then push on farther. The news of these events naturally caused the greatest alarm to the Pope, who beheld himself forsaken by his friends and at the mercy of his enemies. The first day's fight at Marignano, and the news of the successes achieved by the Swiss, were swelled on the way to Rome into an announcement of the total defeat of the French and Venetians. Cardinal Bibbiena had immediately caused the city to be illuminated, and the Pope determined to tell the great news with his own lips to the Venetian Ambassador, Marin Giorgi. But the following day the latter received despatches from the Signoria announcing the victory, and accordingly arrayed himself in festive attire, hastened to the Vatican and caused the Pope to be awakened. And when Leo appeared, much bewildered and only half dressed, the Orator said to him :—

"Holy Father, yesterday Your Holiness gave me evil and false intelligence, to-day I can give you the good and authentic news that the Swiss have been routed." And so saying he handed him the despatch of the Signoria, on reading which, the Pope exclaimed in consternation : "*Quid ergo erit de nobis, et quid de vobis?*" "It will go well with us," replied the Orator, "for we are with the most Christian king, and your Holiness shall suffer no harm." "We will place ourselves in the hands of the *Cristianissimo*, and crave his mercy,"[1] concluded the Pope, who even at that moment would not speak of yielding to the Venetian Signory.

As a true statesman, Francis I. sought to consolidate his conquest before venturing upon new enterprises. Therefore, after seizing Brescia and some other territories, and attempting to take Verona, which however was defended by the Emperor Maximilian, he arranged a treaty with the Archduke Charles at Noyon (August, 13, 1516), promising him the hand of his daughter, who by bringing with her dowry the French claims on the Neapolitan kingdom, would put an end to all quarrels and wars in that cause. Meanwhile, the Catholic king—no other than the Archduke Charles, who by the decease of Ferdinand of Aragon (January 23, 1516) had succeeded to the Spanish throne, and carried on the government with the aid of Cardinal Ximenes—was to pay 100,000 gold crowns every year until the marriage—necessarily delayed on account of the bride's tender age—could be consummated. Charles, the prime mover of these arrangements, persuaded Maximilian to sign a new treaty (Brussels, December 3, 1516)

[1] Albèri, *Vide* Giorgi's before-quoted "Relazione," pp. 44, 45.

would have more willingly yielded the head of one of the Apostles, consented to part with the group, privately determining to substitute a copy for the original. Indeed, he commissioned Baccio Bandinelli to make one, but even this replica never found its way to France.[1] The King's second request was for the pardon of Francesco Maria della Rovere, Duke of Urbino, who, after having taken pay from the Pope, had come to an understanding with France during the war. But on this point Leo X. was inflexible. He had lost all hope of Naples; he had been compelled to yield Parma and Piacenza, to promise to yield Modena and Reggio; he was resolved to be able to count on Urbino for his kinsmen, and he hated the Duke. Therefore his reply was, that he reserved the right of punishing his own subjects according to the nature of their crimes. And the King did not press the matter further.[2]

Although just escaped from imminent danger, the Pope was by no means satisfied He detested France, was burning with a sense of humiliation, and already trying by underhand means to reconcile Maximilian with the Venetians, in order to pave the way for fresh intrigues and fresh breaches of faith. Instead of fulfilling his agreement to cede Modena to the Duke of Ferrara, who was ready to pay for it, he gave him nothing but words. Meanwhile, he was preparing for the campaign on Urbino, which was to be conducted by Lorenzo. The latter was disposed to hesitate, for he recognized the difficulty of the task, but was spurred on by his own ambition, that of his mother Alfonsina, and the impetuosity of the Pope, who protested that he must uphold the honour of the Church against the Duke. If this man, he added, were allowed to escape punishment, every petty baron in the State would rise in rebellion[3] He therefore proclaimed the poor Duke guilty of felony. Lorenzo set out at the head of a small army; was speedily master of the Duchy, and received investiture from the Pope. But very soon the dispossessed lord, being seconded by Othon de Foix, Seigneur of Lantrec, and Governor of Milan, who was highly enraged by the Pope's faithlessness, and with the efficacious aid of Federigo di Bozzolo, a daring captain of adventure, joined him in the command of large bands of mercenaries, left without employment at the close of the last war, and regained possession of his own State amid the acclamations of his people. The Pope in his fury turned appealingly to his allies, but found them indifferent and distrustful. He then

[1] Gregorovius, *op. cit*, vol. viii. p 191.

[2] Mignet, *op. cit*, vol i. pp 103, 104; Gregorovius, *op. cit.*, vol. viii. p. 192; Vettori, "Sommario," &c., p 315.

[3] Vettori, "Sommario," p 319.

arches, statues, obelisks and temples, all designed by the best Italian artists, many of whom were at that time flourishing in Florence.[1] Some of these erections were copied from ancient monuments at Rome,[2] while others were original inventions. Antonio da San Gallo had built an octagonal temple on the Piazza della Signoria; Baccio Bandinelli, a giant in the Loggia; but the chief attraction to the public was the wooden façade added to the Cathedral. Its architectural portions, bas-reliefs and statues, were the work of Jacopo Sansovino, its paintings by Andrea del Sarto. The original idea had once before been suggested by Lorenzo the Magnificent.[3]

The Pope, after leaving Florence, made a state entry into Bologna on the 7th December, and the King arrived there on the 11th and stayed there until the 15th. On the 22nd December Leo X. returned to Florence, remaining there for Christmas and the series of festivals given in Carnival, until the 19th of February, when he at last started for Rome[4]

The meeting at Bologna led to the ratification of a treaty that had been already drawn up on October 13, 1515. The Pope not only repudiated his previous arrangement with the Emperor, but, with far greater violence to his feelings, had to restore Parma and Piacenza to the King, and promise the restitution of Modena and Reggio to the Duke of Ferrara, who, on his part, was to return him the sum already disbursed to the Emperor. Francis I. promised, in his turn, to defend Florence and the States of the Church, and to bestow on the brother and nephew of the Pope certain dignities and revenues in France. The Pragmatic Sanction was abrogated by a treaty increasing the subordination of the Gallican Church to the monarch and the Pope.[5]

On this occasion Francis I. had two more requests to make to the Pope. He begged the gift of the Laocoon group, recently discovered in Rome, and already famous throughout the civilized world. Leo X., who, to use the expression of a modern writer,

[1] Vasari, "Vite," &c., Le Monnier edition ("Life of Andrea del Sarto"), vol. viii. p. 267.

[2] "Erant variæ structuræ similes illis quæ videntur in Urbe Roma, videlicet obeliscus sicut in Vaticano, columna sicut in Campo Martio, et huiusmodi usque ad Sanctam Mariam Novellam." "Diario" of Paride De Grassis. Roscoe published this and other fragments of the "Diario" in his "Life of Leo X."

[3] Vasari, *op. cit.*, vol. viii. p. 267.

[4] It has been repeatedly asserted that in the course of these Florentine festivities Machiavelli's "Mandragola" was played before the Pope. But there is no mention of any such performance in the contemporary chronicles, and as we shall presently show, there are documents disproving the assertion.

[5] Mignet, "Rivalité," &c., pp. 103, 104; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. viii. p. 192.

Cardinals; hence the College comprised many adherents of the Della Rovere family, who were naturally much irritated by the persecution waged against Duke Francesco Maria. The College had likewise another motive for still deeper wrath. During his recent stay in Tuscany, the Pope had meddled with Siennese politics, helping on a revolution by which Borghese Petrucci, son of Pandolfo and brother of Cardinal Alfonso, was overthrown and another Petrucci, Borghese's own cousin, put in his place. Now Pandolfo had been an active contributor to the restoration of the Medici in Florence, and the Cardinal had done much towards the election of Leo X. The revolution promoted by the Pope's ingratitude not only drove Cardinal Petrucci from Sienna, but also deprived him of his possessions. He was now in Rome, and so fiercely indignant that he carried a dagger whenever he went out hunting with the Pope, and even when attending Consistory, in the hope of finding opportunity and courage for vengeance. Meanwhile, he sought and gained adherents, and the campaign on Urbino added to their numbers. It was easy for him to win over Cardinal Soderini, who had never forgiven the banishment of his brother the ex-Gonfalonier, although the latter was leading a peaceful and honoured life in Rome, where he died in 1522, and was buried in Santa Maria del Popolo. Neither had he pardoned the non-fulfilment of the projected matrimonial alliance between the houses of Medici and Soderini.

Cardinal Riario, kinsman of the dispossessed Duke of Urbino, being put aside and neglected by the Pope, also threw in his lot with the malcontents. All was prepared, when certain letters from Cardinal Petrucci to his secretary were intercepted, and furnished proofs that the conspiracy was hatched and ready to break out. A surgeon of considerable note, one Battista da Vercelli, who had come to Rome under the pretext of curing the Pope of his fistula, was to administer poison to him. The Cardinals Petrucci, Sauli, and Riario were instantly cast into prison. The first was strangled; his secretary and the surgeon, who were arrested in Florence, were put to death with horrible cruelty. Cardinal Sauli was allowed to ransom his life, and so too was Cardinal Riario, at the price of 50,000 ducats. Cardinals Soderini and Adriani, being forced to confess their complicity in Consistory, only escaped by paying 12,500 ducats each.

In the course of this trial Leo X. behaved with the utmost perfidy, holding out promises to all for money and keeping faith with none after receipt of the coin. Accordingly the majority of the incriminated prelates took to flight after paying their ransoms. It was generally believed that the Pope's object was

hired new captains of adventure, some in his own name, others in that of the Florentines, whom he thus compelled to share the expenses of an enterprise in which they had no concern.

The war continued to spread, to the serious injury of the population subjected to the requisitions of all the mercenary troops who, having no other work on hand, had an interest in prolonging it. And when their pay fell into arrears because the Pope appropriated the money for his own pleasures instead, they indemnified themselves by renewed exactions and pillage. Lorenzo retained the chief command of the campaign, but his men paid but little deference to his authority. Nevertheless, he acted as leader in various skirmishes, in one of which he received a wound compelling him to repair to Florence for some weeks of medical treatment before returning to the camp. Francesco Maria della Rovere, reinforced by deserters from the papal army, made frequent incursions and ravages on the enemy's territory. And he would have been victorious, had not his forces been composed of bands of adventurers upon whom no reliance could be placed, for the Spanish troops on either side refused to fight one another in earnest. So at last, wearied, discouraged, and penniless, he decided to surrender his dominions, after obtaining leave, through the intervention of King Francis and King Charles, to carry away his personal property, and above all the library that had been collected by Duke Frederic at an enormous expense. Accordingly, September, 1517, witnessed the conclusion of this unlucky campaign, costing 800,000 ducats, a large part of which sum was debited by the Holy Father to the Florentines, who were but scantily recompensed by the possession of San Leo[1] and the district of Sestino. It was at this moment that Giuliano being now dead, Machiavelli altered the dedication of his "Prince," by addressing it to Lorenzo, who had now learned by experience what was to be expected from mercenary troops, and was at the head of a new State acquired by force of arms and good fortune. But, as we have elsewhere remarked, there is no evidence to show that the little volume was ever presented and accepted.

This war led to serious results. If the Florentines were highly disgusted at the heavy expenses they had been forced to incur, no less was the discontent of the Roman Cardinals, who were so greatly incensed that they planned a conspiracy against the Pope. For this there was accum[illegible]d material ready to their hands. Since the April [illegible] had only nominated eight new

[1] Capponi, "St[illegible] Firenze," vol. ii. pp. 324-26; Vett[illegible] "Sommario," pp. [illegible]

a buffoon, and their companionship seemed to be his only consolation during the last hours of his life. He expired on May 4, 1519. Six days earlier his wife had breathed her last after giving birth to a daughter, Caterina dei Medici, afterwards only too famous as the queen who wrought so much evil upon France.

Giuliano having died on March 17, 1516, the legitimate line of Cosimo the elder became extinct at the decease of Lorenzo. There only remained some illegitimate children, such as the Cardinal Giulio, who was now appointed to the government of Florence. He had experience of public business, was prudent and of simple habits, and being an ecclesiastic, and therefore without heirs, there were hopes that it would be easier for him to rule with the moderation and show of liberty so dearly prized by the Florentines. In fact, this was the moment chosen to ask the advice of many influential citizens as to the form of government best adapted to Florence; and among the many views expressed there were included, as we shall see, those of Guicciardini and of Machiavelli. The first, as usual, advised a government concentrated in the hands of a few trusty counsellors; the second a government established on popular favour, after the plan that he had always advocated.[1] But all these discussions ended in talk.

Meanwhile, the affairs of Europe were involved in new and serious complications, and although the Pope had no longer to study the interests of his brother Giuliano, or nephew Lorenzo, yet he still yearned with the same avidity for Parma, Piacenza, Ferrara, and Perugia, and now coveted them for the States of the Church. An attempt made against Ferrara, towards the end of 1519, resulted in failure. But in the following year he succeeded in a sudden attack on Perugia, during the absence of its ruler, Giovan Paolo Baglioni. For although up to that moment this despot had always acted like a fox and a wolf combined, he now let himself be entrapped like a lamb; and the Pope, having seduced him by flattery, imprisoned, and afterwards beheaded him in the Castle of Sant' Angelo, in June, 1520.

The death of Maximilian I. occurred during this period, at the beginning of 1519, and King Charles and King Francis I. immediately began their contest for the imperial crown. The Pope being unfavourable to the election of either, negotiated secretly with both, and hoped for the success of some secondary German potentate. Although the ally of France, he had, early in 1519,

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. ii. p. 325; Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. iv. p. 105; Capponi, "Storia," &c., vol. ii. p. 328.

not solely revenge, but also that of reaping pecuniary advantage; and this idea received decided corroboration when, on June 26, 1517, he nominated a batch of thirty-one Cardinals, exacting from them an enormous sum, said to amount to 500,000 ducats, which was nevertheless insufficient to cover his monstrous current expenses. By this scandalous and wholesale creation of Cardinals, the Pope also sought to fill the College with his own tools, and thus strengthen his position and smooth the way for the future election of Cardinal Giulio, his counsellor and assistant in the lucrative transaction.[1]

Meanwhile the Pope was endeavouring to gain some profit from the French by making use of Francesco Vettori, now Florentine Ambassador to their Court; and with his assistance arranged a marriage between Lorenzo dei Medici and Madeleine de la Tour d'Auvergne, a lady of royal blood. In March, 1518, Lorenzo made a journey to Amboise, with equal pomp to that displayed by Cæsar Borgia, and bearing gifts to his bride and to the queen valued at the sum of 300,000 ducats. He stood as godfather to the Dauphin, and was the hero of continual festivities, afterwards repeated on his return to Florence, when he again resumed the reins of government. But he had little inclination to remain in that city,[2] where he was unable to reign independently and had to steer his way between the republican tendencies of the Florentines and the will of the Pope, who wished him to be as docile an instrument in Tuscany as he had previously been at Urbino. In the opinion of Vettori, and the still more explicit judgment of Machiavelli, Lorenzo was by this time convinced that Florence was only to be ruled by civil methods, and therefore had at last found favour with the citizens.[3] But it would seem that it was exactly the need of governing in this fashion, added to the delicacy of his health, which was rapidly failing from long standing disease and continued dissipation, that disgusted him with his post. So he presently went to Rome, where it was evident to all that he was a dying man. He saw no one excepting his brother-in-law, Filippo Strozzi, and

[1] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. viii. p. 214; Capponi, "Storia," &c., vol. ii. p. 326. According to Gregorovius, the number of the new Cardinals was thirty-nine; but he possibly includes the other eight previously elected. Vettori states that the total number of Cardinals created by Leo X. during his pontificate was forty-two, "and that he obtained money both from those that he elected and those that he condemned." "Sommario," p. 339; M. Brosch, "Geschichte der Kirchen Staates," vol. i. p. 50.

[2] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 527.

[3] Vettori, "Sommario," p. 328. An undated fragment of one of Machiavelli's letters, marked No. xv at p. 29, in vol. viii of the "Opere," states that Lorenzo had roused much hope in the city, and speaks very highly of his mildness and other good qualities.

both to Rome and France.[1] Guicciardini also steadfastly denies that the Pope was animated on this head by any real anxiety for religion, and even declares him responsible for the progress of the Reformation, owing to the indecency with which he promoted the sale of indulgences for the dead and the living, for the sole purpose of making money. Indignation reached its height, he says, when ministers of religion were seen to sell at a low price, or even gamble away in taverns, the right of freeing dead men's souls from purgatory, and when it was known that the Pope had, with incredible frivolity, granted to his sister Maddalena the emoluments on the traffic in indulgences in many parts of Germany.[2] "The Pope," he concludes elsewhere, "was probably moved by his desire for Parma, Piacenza, and Ferrara; perhaps by the dread of seeing the two sovereigns join against him, and possibly, too, by the hope of achieving some great result before he died. Cardinal dei Medici, who knows all the Pope's secrets, told me that he hoped first, with the aid of Charles V., to expel the French from Genoa and Milan; then, with the aid of the French, to drive Charles V. out of Naples, thus realizing the triumph of Italian independence, to which his predecessor had manifestly aspired. He well knew that his own strength was insufficient for success, and that it might not be easy to win the alliance of the power he had first combated; nevertheless, he hoped that at the fitting moment he might be able, by the election of French cardinals and other fair means, to induce the king to help him and almost enjoy the spectacle of seeing the same fate befall Cæsar that had befallen himself."[3] Nor should this cause us any surprise. Although constantly impelled by personal aims, Leo X was also very aspiring. No longer having heirs to provide for, it was easier for him to be brought to conceive, although never more than superficially, some grandiose design fitted to make him descend to posterity as a princely deliverer. Hence he now allowed it to be supposed, perhaps even believed for a moment himself, that he meant to re-establish the Florentine Republic; then feigned a desire to liberate Italy from her invaders and make her a united country. It was this great, although most mutable, ambition of his that continually deceived Machiavelli; who, being always inflamed by political ideals, was always ready to hope. It was thus that the secretary had been inspired to write his "Prince," and had despatched so many letters to Vettori and others in order to feed

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," pp 334, 335.
[2] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. vi. pp. 216, 217.
[3] Ibid, vol. vii. p. 5

come to a secret agreement with Charles that was to be binding for life; but it appears that the moment he was informed of Maximilian's decease, he refused to sign it, and concluded instead a treaty of capitulation with Francis I., whose election he then pretended to favour. There was also some rumour of another secret arrangement with Francesco Maria Sforza, son of the Moor, and heir presumptive to Lombardy, which was still in the hands of the French. It was asserted that Sforza would yield up everything to Cardinal Giulio, in exchange for the latter's purple, his chancellorship, and benefices bringing in a yearly revenue of fifty thousand ducats.[1]

But on June 28, 1519, Charles was elected Emperor, as the fifth of that name. Young, ambitious, of great political and military talent, he now added to the power of the Empire the sovereignty of Spain, the Low Countries, and the kingdom of Naples; it was to be foreseen that in a short time he would be arbiter of the fate of Europe. Accordingly, the Pope was increasingly anxious to ally himself with France; he had indeed already signed the treaty and despatched it to Francis, who delayed adhering to it from fear of the Pontiff's accustomed duplicity. Then, without loss of time, he came to an agreement with Charles V., who not only promised to defend the States of the Florentines and the Church, but even to cede him the coveted provinces of Parma and Piacenza, and to assist him against the Duke of Ferrara. Milan was to be reconquered and bestowed on Francesco Maria Sforza; the Cardinal Giulio, promoter and arranger of this treaty, was to be rewarded by a pension from the bishopric of Toledo, and another pension was stipulated for the boy Alexander, Duke Lorenzo's illegitimate son.[2]

There was much discussion on the motives that could have induced the Pope to throw himself thus suddenly into the arms of so powerful a potentate, and to render him still more powerful by abandoning the French king with whom he had just formed a bond of relationship. It was urged by some that he had acted with the object of strengthening the hand of Charles V. against the Reformation, which was now assuming threatening proportions. But those who best understood the Pope refused all credence in similar conjectures, inclining to think him solely urged by reasons of personal interest, to wit, his perennial thirst for the acquisition of Parma and Piacenza, refused by Francis I., and now promised him by Charles. So says Vettori, who had then been ambassador

[1] Capponi, "Storia," &c., vol. ii. pp. 329-32. See also the documents in Appendix of the same volume, pp. 535-46

[2] Capponi, "Storia," &c, vol. ii. pp 329-32.

that he should have lived so long. Although only forty-six years of age, he had by no means a strong constitution. "His head was so large as to be but ill-proportioned to the size of his body, and was always choked with catarrh; neither could he be said to be of regular living, inasmuch as he sometimes fasted too rigorously, and at others, on the contrary, ate to excess. His life had abounded in vicissitudes; but the eight concluding years of it were in truth most fortunate, both on account of his restoration to Florence, his election, and the whole of his pontificate, during which the greater the errors which he committed, the kinder was fortune in repairing them, since even the conspiracy of the Cardinals enabled him to renew the Sacred College and fill it with his own friends. He disliked trouble, and yet brought much upon himself by the continual desire to aggrandize his kindred; but fortune, by way of an additional favour, even freed him of this anxiety, by depriving him of his nephew as well as his brother."[1] And after this Vettori is unable to decide whether there was more to praise than to blame in Pope Leo X. Guicciardini, too, confines himself to saying that his character afforded much occasion for both, since he had proved more prudent and less good than had been previously expected.[2] The courtiers shed tears on his loss, but for this they were assailed by pungent satires, and some one wrote from Rome saying that the Pope had died in very bad odour, and that no one had commended his departing soul save Fra Mariano the buffoon.[3]

Undoubtedly his character presented many contradictions. Amidst the greatest political events, during the course of sanguinary and repeated wars, while the Reformation was dividing and lacerating the Church, Leo X. not only passed his time among artists and men of letters, but gave even more of his society to *improvisatori*, singers and jesters. Fond of music, and very vain of his vocal powers, he took part in the performances of his courtiers, showering generous gifts on those who accompanied his singing. He frequently played at chess and cards with his cardinals; but his chief delight was to listen to improvisations of Latin verse, and he also enjoyed measuring himself against others in this pastime, and scoffing at those who considered themselves poets merely because they had the knack of spinning bad rhymes. These histrionic poets of his were many in number. Among them Andrea Morone of Brescia was celebrated for his declamation and his skill in accompanying himself on the violin. He is supposed to have been the original of Raphael's famous violin

[1] Vettori, "Sommario," pp. 336–40.
[2] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. vii. p. 71.
[3] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. viii. p. 262.

the flame. But whenever seeming to burn most brightly, the fire always expired on a sudden without leaving a spark behind.

The Pope had vacillated even to the very last hour with Charles, but this monarch brought him to the point by the threat of convoking a Council; and so at last, on May 29, 1521, the treaty was signed and the war instantly began. Together with the Florentines, Leo had 600 men-at-arms in readiness; Marquis Pescara, Ferdinando d'Avalos was marching the same number from Naples with the addition of 2,000 foot soldiers. In the Imperial camp there were 2,000 Spaniards, 4,000 Italians, and as many Germans and Swiss. Francesco Guicciardini, papal governor of Reggio, sent 10,000 ducats to Marone, who was stationed at Trent with Francesco Maria Sforza and the Milanese exiles, in readiness to march to the attack of the French near Parma. Nevertheless, there was great and general mistrust of the Pope; it was feared that as soon as he gained what he wanted, he would leave his friends to their fate; furthermore, it was well known that even the Florentines fought unwillingly against the soldiers of France, on account of their extensive commercial relations with that country. But, on the other hand, the French were very badly led; their best generals, such as the Constable de Bourbon, and the veteran Trivulzio, having fallen into disgrace and been driven from the camp by means of court cabals. The army was now commanded by Odetto de Foix, Seigneur of Lautrec, whose chief merit consisted in being brother to Countess Châteaubriant, the mistress of the king. Accordingly, the Imperial captains led their troops into Mantuan territory, and after crossing first the Po and then the Adda, joined forces with the Swiss, who had arrived before them, and moved together upon Milan, which was quickly taken, as Lautrec was quite incompetent for its defence.[1]

Leo X. was staying in his villa of Magliana when, on the 28th November, he received this happy news, and celebrated it with much rejoicing. It was winter; he had a fire in his room, and he continually went to open the window, to watch the merry-making of his attendants in honour of the victory. This sufficed to bring on a violent attack of fever, to which he succumbed on the 1st December. Rumour, as usual, hinted at poison, and many unfounded hypotheses were started; but his repeated exposure to sudden changes of temperature was more than enough to cause the fever that killed him. Vettori remarked, that it was wonderful

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. vii. pp 40–67; Vettori, "Sommario," pp 334, 335; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c, vol. viii. pp. 261–65; Mignet, "Rivalité," &c., vol i p 287 and fol.; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. vii. chap ii.

dinners furnished occasion for a thousand devices, a thousand practical jokes. At one time he would serve his parasites with the flesh of monkeys or crows, at another, on the contrary, with the choicest viands. He often quitted the city and went out sporting in the dress of a layman with his eyeglass in hand; at other times he would fish in the lake of Bolsena, or stay at Magliana where he had very beautiful gardens. And wherever he was, whether in the public ways at his villa, in the Vatican, and even in his sleeping chamber, he was attended by a swarm of poets, *literati*, artists and singers; nor did this cause him any annoyance, for, on the contrary, he loved to be always surrounded and courted by a crowd. The Pope also took great delight in theatrical performances, and was an energetic promoter and encourager of the stage, undoubtedly helping on its progress in those days. The plays of Trissino, Rucellai, and Ariosto were frequently acted in his presence; so, too, the famous and indecent "Calandria" of Bibbiena, one of his chief favourites and for which Baldassare Peruzzi painted the scenery in 1518. In 1519 Ariosto's play, "I Suppositi," was performed at the Castle of St. Angelo in the apartments of Cardinal Cibo, nephew to the Pope. But it was the Pope himself who bore the expense of the entertainment, and therefore played the host, receiving and bestowing his blessing on the guests. On entering the theatre he took his seat in a prominent place and looked through his glass long and admiringly at the drop scene painted by Raphael. The curtain was decorated with a portrait of Frà Mariano, the buffoon, surrounded by tormenting devils. After the performance, a splendid supper was given to the Cardinals, cavaliers and ladies, and the Pope enjoyed himself very much among the latter.[1]

It is a curious fact that, with all the talent and taste of which Leo X. was the undoubted possessor; with all his desire to play, as he did, the Mæcenas on a grand scale, he should have been almost always surrounded by very mediocre *literati* in an age productive of so many noble intellects. Among the best of his courtiers were Bembo, Sadoleto, Molza, and Rucellai, and these, although possessed of much ability, were by no means men of genius; nearly all the rest were beneath mediocrity, often mere pedants or downright buffoons. Leo X. had neither the glory nor good fortune to promote any one of the great literary enterprises of his day. The histories and political writings of Guicciardini

[1] Reumont, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. iii. pp. 133, 134. This entertainment is minutely described in a well-known epistle of the Ferrarese Ambassador. *Vide* also E. Muntz, "Raphael, sa vie, son œuvre, et son temps," pp. 421, 422. Paris, Hachette, 1881.

player. Another, Camillo Querno by name, had written a poem in twenty-thousand verses of such sort that the Roman Academy conferred upon him a crown of cabbage and laurel, and, as a still greater mark of contempt, the title of *arch-poet*. The Pope was accustomed to feed this man with tit-bits, and to let him drink from his own glass, watering the wine if the verses went badly, but when they pleased him capping them by improvisations of his own. "Archipoeta facit versus pro mille poetis," said Querno, and the Pope, filling up his glass, instantly replied: "Et pro mille aliis archipoeta bibit." Querno asked for wine, saying: "Porrige quod faciat mihi carmina docta, Falernum," whereupon the Pope reminded him that wine brought on gout: "Hoc etiam enervat debilitatque pedes." Contests of the same kind would often be carried on between the Holy Father and any fair dame chancing to be at Court who had the gift of improvising in Latin. One day the gallant Pope finding himself surrounded by ladies, repeated half a line from Virgil, saying: "Now indeed I may call myself 'formosi gregis pastor;'" whereupon one of readier wit than the rest completed the line by exclaiming, "formosier ipse."[1] Another atrocious poetaster, Barabello, who was sixty years of age and thought himself a second Petrarch, was the continual laughing stock of the Pope and his Court without ever being conscious of it. On one occasion they made him believe that he was to be crowned at the Capitol, and led him through the streets in procession, dressed in ancient costume and mounted on an elephant, amid the acclamations of the people. But on reaching the bridge of St. Angelo, they brought the farce to a sudden end on some slight pretext, leaving the poor man undeceived and highly bewildered.[2]

The chief expenses of this Pontiff, who, with a revenue of 420,000 ducats, was always in debt, were incurred for his table, at which he entertained poets, courtiers, singers, buffoons, real or supposititious relations, and above all Florentines. "For Pope Julius II.," says the Venetian Orator, "about four thousand ducats per month were sufficient; but even eight or nine thousand ducats were not enough for Leo X. on account of the vast expense of his table, and this was principally owing to the large number of Florentines fed at his board."[3] We have said that he seldom indulged in excess, being too epicurean in his tastes; but his

[1] Settembrini, "Lezioni di letteratura Italiana," vol. ii. pp. 36, 37; Tiraboschi, "Storia della Letteratura Italiana," tom. vii. pp. 15–17. *Vide* at the end of the same volume: Fr. Arsilli Senogalliensis, "De Poetis urbanis ad Paulum Jovium."

[2] Reumont, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. iii. part ii. pp. 131, 132.

[3] Albèri, the already quoted "Relazione" of Marin Giorgi, pp. 56, 57. Other contemporaries repeat the same statement.

works of Raphael, whom he patronized and loved so sincerely as to have serious thoughts of raising him to the purple. It is true that even as regards painting, the Pope only carried on the great undertakings previously begun by Julius II.; but it is certain that in these years, Raphael was incited by his encouragement and appreciation to produce a positively enormous number of masterpieces, which although conferring immortality on the painter's name, shortened his life, and increased the general lamentation for his premature decease.

At the time of the election of Leo X., Raphael was at work on the Hall of Heliodorus, and no sooner was this finished than he began the Destruction of Borgo. The themes now given to the painter were of a more limited, narrower, and we might say, of a more personal range, owing to the greater vanity of the new Pope, who desired the allusions to himself to be much too transparent. Accordingly his figure is always obtruded in the foreground, sometimes no little to the injury of the artist's noble conceptions. During these years Raphael took in hand the walls of the Vatican Loggie, constructed by the architect Bramante, and covered them with ornate designs, arabesques, and different compositions, painted by his scholars, but under his direction and from his own designs. He was thus the inventor of a new style, inspired by works of antiquity, but nevertheless the distinct outcome of his own fancy and of the Italian Renaissance. Indeed, these arabesques may be regarded as the fitting and æsthetic framework of the period. He likewise painted the St. Cecilia and the Spasimo; made the admirable designs for the legend of Psyche in the Farnesina palace, afterwards painted by his best pupils, and completed a very large number of portraits. It was also during the pontificate of Leo X. that he produced the Madonna of San Sisto and the Transfiguration, undoubtedly two of the grandest of his works; and the same Pope gave him an appointment almost equivalent to that of director in chief of all the Fine Arts and of all excavations. He therefore employed much time in surveying and sketching the old monuments of Rome, and superintending ex cavations for the discovery of others. And with the aid of Fulvio Antiquario, he undertook the difficult task of a complete plan of ancient Rome, based on careful study of its buildings. He left a report on this subject, that was long attributed to Baldassare Castiglione, and actually published under his name, but afterwards recognized as the work of Raphael.[1] It is impossible to realize

[1] Calcagnini wrote of him as follows:
"Nunc Romam in Roma querit, reperitque Raphael,
Querere magni hominis, sed reperire Dei est."

and Machiavelli owed positively nothing to his assistance, although the latter was frequently stirred by the hope of gaining his favour, and the former was much employed by him in State affairs. The greatest poet of the age, Lodovico Ariosto, with whom the Pope, when Cardinal, had been very intimate and lavish of generous offers, obtained nothing but empty words when he came to Rome. Leo received him with a great show of affection, and kissed him on both cheeks; but all ended there. So at this time the poet wrote: "I am like the magpie who having discovered a small spring of water in a time of great drought, had to let all drink before him: his master and his kin, servants, cattle and useful animals, so that at last the poor bird was left to die of thirst. Thus there is no hope for me in Rome."

> "Li nipoti e i parenti, che son tanti,
> Prima hanno a ber; poi quei che lo aiutaro
> A vestirsi. . . . . . .
> Se fin che tutti beano aspetto a trarme
> La volontà di bere, o me di sete
> O secco il pozzo veder d'acqua parme.
> Meglio è star nella solita quiete,
> Che provar s'egli è ver che qualungere erge
> Fortuna in alto, il tuffa prima in Lete." [1]

It was very different with the fine arts. Nevertheless the Pope did but little for architecture and sculpture. He neglected Michel Angelo, made him waste much time in selecting blocks of marble at Carrara, set him to carve columns and execute many works which, being uncongenial to his genius, were never completed, and sometimes not even begun.

The celebrated monuments to Lorenzo and Giuliano dei Medici, executed at this period and erected in the sacristy of S. Lorenzo in Florence, were owed to the initiative, not of the Pope but of Cardinal Giulio. Leo X. interested himself in the building of St. Peter's, which had been started with so much ardour by his predecessor, and, in order to carry it on, scandalized the whole of the Christian world by the sale of indulgences in Germany. But the money collected by this unworthy means was more efficacious in hastening the outbreak of the Reformation, then in promoting the construction of the mighty temple, which indeed progressed more slowly than under former Popes who had devoted themselves to it in earnest. But no one can deny the great encouragement given by Leo X. to painting, and especially to the

[1] Ariosto, Satira iv., verses 154 and fol in the "Opere Minori" (Le Monnier edition), vol i. p. 184 and fol.



CHAPTER VII.

Machiavelli and his family in the country—His children—His correspondence with his nephew Giovanni Vernacci—His journey to Genoa—The Oricellari Gardens—The "Discourses" of Guicciardini—"Discourse on the reform of the Florentine government"—The mission to Lucca—"Summary of the affairs of Lucca"—"The Life of Castruccio Castracani."



HE literary fashions in vogue at the court of Leo X. might have shown Machiavelli the expediency of turning to the composition of verses, satires, and comedies. Such works would certainly have proved more lucrative to him; and in various attempts he had already shown a gift in that direction, of which he gave still better proofs at a later date. We have seen how he wrote his "Decades" while engaged in a multiplicity of affairs, barely leaving him time for necessary repose; we have seen how after his disgrace he passed a great part of his days beside a spring in the shade of his woods studying the Latin and Italian poets. And from a letter dated 17th of December, 1517, written by him to Lodovico Alamanni in Rome, we not only learn that he had just read Ariosto's "Orlando Furioso" with great admiration, but that he complained of not being included among the many poets therein mentioned; adding that he was engaged upon a poem called "L'Asino,"[1] in which he should certainly render justice to the eminent merits of Ariosto. This poem, containing many satirical allusions to Machiavelli's contemporaries, was soon put aside, and although at this period he undoubtedly wrote more verses and other purely literary works, they were not compositions

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. Letter xlvi.

how the energies of one man could have been equal to so much labour; it is easy to understand how he came to die in the year 1520 at the early age of thirty-seven.

It can excite no surprise that Leo X. should have lavished treasures in the promotion of works of similar quantity and quality; and when it is added that although very liberal in all his transactions with Raphael and artists in general, he was still more generous towards his singers, players, and parasites,[1] it will not seem astonishing that his splendid revenues should have been insufficient to cover his expenses. Alexander VI. and even Julius II. habitually appropriated the fortunes of all prelates who died in Rome, and for this purpose Alexander frequently resorted to the expedient of procuring their death by poison or the dagger. Leo X., however, being far more humane in such respects, never committed this iniquity, and thus from all sides people thronged to Rome to enjoy the gay life of the city, its novel tranquility and the generous protection of its ruler. But the Pope left a vast accumulation of debts at his decease. He owned 200,000 ducats to the Bini bank, 32,000 to the Gaddi, to the Ricasoli 10,000, to Cardinal Salviati 80,000, to Cardinal Santi Quattro 150,000, and as much to Cardinal Armellini. The Strozzi were on the point of failure, and many of Leo's intimates ruined. The treasury of the Apostolic Chamber was so empty that there was not enough in it to purchase a new bier, and thus it fell out that one previously used for the burial of Cardinal Riario had to serve for the obsequies of the most splendid of the successors of St. Peter.[2]

[1] *Vide* on this head E Muntz, "Raphael," &c, chap xii. p. 426 and fol.

[2] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol. viii. pp. 260–262. For particulars touching this Pope, besides the well-known works of Roscoe, Ranke, Gregorovius and Reumont, there may now be consulted the new works to which we have occasionally referred; *i e.*, "Raphaël, sa vie," &c., by E. Muntz, and the "Geschichte des Kirchen Staates" of Brosch. The latter author gives a brief account of the life of Leo X. at the beginning of his book.

his senior, very little is known. But a sentence of punishment pronounced against him in 1528 for blasphemy at the gambling table, and for an attempted outrage on a woman of the neighbourhood, gives us no good opinion of his character.[1] And Lodovico, next in age to Bernardo, was of a very violent disposition. One of his letters, dated 14th of August, 1525,[2] introduces us to him at Adrianople, where he was engaged in commerce, and living in the midst of continual strife, always wrathful and panting for revenge. Already in the same year he had been several times punished by the Eight for his share in riots, resulting in bloodshed on both sides. Nor were these quarrels in honourable causes; one of them having been excited by jealousy for a woman of evil life[3] Later he was able, at least partially, to redeem his character by fighting and losing his life in defence of liberty, during the siege of Florence[4] But, in the meantime he was certainly one of the sons causing most anxiety to their father. Of the girl Bartolommea, or Baccia, afterwards married to one of the Ricci, we know very little; but from the second will drawn up by Machiavelli, in 1522, we learn that he thought of ensuring her a dowry in the *Monte delle Fanciulle*, but had not yet succeeded in doing so.

Even Marietta, his wife, remains very much in the background. We have only a single letter of hers, written to Machiavelli in Rome, shortly after the birth of one of her children. Unfortunately it has no date; but certainly belongs to an earlier period than the times now under notice. It is written in a spirit of sincere affection, we may even say of love, towards her husband. She complains of the infrequency of his letters, and reminds him that he well knows that she is never in good spirits when he is away from her, and less than ever now that she hears that there

[1] On the 22nd of November he had been condemned by the Eight to a year's relegation, three miles distant from Florence, and to a fine of 150 *lire*. So says Signor Amico at p. 613 But as he gives no precise indications we have failed to discover the original sentence in the Archives.

[2] To be found with another, dated 22nd of May, 1527, among the "Carte del Machiavelli," Case v. Nos 46 and 22. *Vide* Appendix of Italian edition, document i. There could have been no great interval between the birth of Bernardo and of Lodovico, since they were both balloted at the same time for the Gonfalone di Nicchio (Reg. orig. of the Ballot of 1524, at c. 12). On the 8th of June, 1517, Machiavelli wrote to his nephew Giovanni Vernacci: "Bernardo and Lodovico are reaching manhood." *Vide* Appendix of Italian edition, document iii

[3] These sentences also are recorded by Amico at p 614. We have only discovered in the Archives the first, dated 11th of May, 1525 It is among the decrees of the Eight (May and August, 1525, at c. 6*t*). In this Lodovico is sentenced to pay two gold florins, for having thrashed a notary.

[4] This fact is mentioned by the historians of the siege.

of any length. His spirit was too sadly disturbed by recent events in Florence, and his own misfortunes; his mind still pre-occupied by reminiscences and memories of the past; his attention too earnestly absorbed in meditation on the events daily agitating all Europe and threatening Italy. Hence it was only in political writing that he found any solace, since this alone could take possession of his soul, and by absorbing all his faculties, succeed in bringing him oblivion of the miserable state of life to which he was condemned.

He remained therefore in his rustic abode, and employed his time in giving polishing touches to the "Prince," continuing the "Discourses," and completing the "Art of War." In this little villa, situated among the hills at several hours' distance from Florence, he seemed to be imprisoned among woods and fields, and exiled from the native city that had been the scene of all his activities and joys, of his perished hopes and his calamities. He felt himself, as it were, isolated from the world, and sought for peace in solitude and study. Yet whenever he looked towards the north, he had a glimpse, between the curves of the gracious hills, of the dome, the belfry and the Palace tower that continually reminded him of the past and never allowed him to forget the present. At that time he was the parent of five children, four boys and a girl. Bernardo, the eldest, was born on the 8th of November,[1] 1503; Pietro, the youngest, on the 4th of September, 1514.[2] Of the three intermediate children, Lodovico, Guido, and Bartolommea, the age is not certified. But, in short, the family was numerous, the patrimony very scanty, and these children caused anxiety. One or two, like Pietro, who afterwards led an adventurous military life, were still of very tender years. Guido was as yet in his boyhood; or, as we shall see by a letter of his dated 1527, he was still studying grammar. Of very gentle disposition, he embraced the ecclesiastical and literary career, but never rose above mediocrity.[3] Of Bernardo, who was considerably

[1] This is the date given in Passerini ("Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. l.), in many other writers, and that is confirmed in Libro iii dell' Età (in Cod. 10*t*, S. Spirito, Gonfalone Nicchio) in the "Archivio delle Tratte" at Florence.

[2] Passerini gives the date of 14th of December, 1514, but as usual omits to quote the document from which the information was derived. In the life of Pietro, written by his brother Guido, that is to be found among the "Carte del Machiavelli" (Case v. No 188), and published by Signor Amico at the end of his "Vita di N. Machiavelli," we are told instead that Pietro was born the 4th of September, 1514, *dum sol oriebatur*. This date is also confirmed by the epitaphs, composed for the same Pietro by his brother Guido (Case v. No. 170 and fol.).

[3] In the above-mentioned Case v. there are several of Guido's literary compositions.

only lived for three days after her birth.[1] In 1514, Machiavelli wrote to him on business matters, and proposed arranging a marriage for him; on the 17th of August, 1515, he made excuses for not writing more frequently, "because the times are of a sort to make me forget myself. Yet I never forget thee, and always love thee as my own son, and myself and my belongings are ever at thy disposal"[2] His letters were often lost on the way to the East; whereupon the nephew would write again complaining of his uncle's silence, and Machiavelli was obliged to reiterate the same assurances of affection. "The loss of my letters will make thee think that I have forgotten thee, but this is by no means the case, inasmuch as fate has left me nothing but my family and friends, and to these I cling. And if I do not write with much greater frequency, it is because I have grown useless to myself, my relations and friends, for so has my painful destiny willed it. The only good thing left to me is my sound health and that of all my family."[3] Later, in 1517, he wrote to him again, and also made his sons write; but, as usual, the letters miscarried, and he therefore sent him another epistle on the 5th of January, 1518. Of the latter he made two copies and gave them to two different persons, and wrote all this in detail to his nephew on the 25th of the same month[4] And on the 8th of June he told him that he loved him more than ever now that "he had proved himself a good and worthy man. Indeed I am proud of thee, since I brought thee up. As in old times my house is always at thy service, although it be but a poor and comfortless place."[5] No less affectionate were the letters of the nephew. On the 31st of October, 1517, he wrote as usual for news of his uncle and the family, complaining that none had reached him for the last twelve months. "You no longer think of me as a beloved nephew. Yet as I still love you with a filial affection, I hope that if you may have lost your pen and paper for writing to me, you will not have lost the love you have so long borne me."[6] It is clear from other letters that the uncle's love for the nephew consisted of more than

[1] *Vide* at document iii. of Appendix (III.) of Italian edition a letter dated 4th of August, 1513, the original of which is in the Royal Library of Parma. We are indebted to the librarian's kindness for the copy in our possession.

[2] *Vide* document iii. of Appendix (III.) of Italian edition Letter dated 20th of April, 1514, and "Opere," vol. viii. Letter xlii. (dated 17th of August, 1515) p. 150.

[3] "Opere," vol. viii. p. 151. Letters xliii. and xliv. (dated 19th of November, 1515, and 15th of February, 1516).

[4] *Vide* document iii of Appendix (III.) of Italian edition. Letters of the 5th and 25th of January, 1518.

[5] "Opere," vol. viii. Letter xlv., p 152

[6] *Vide* document iv. of Appendix (III.) of Italian edition. The original letter is to be found in the Archivio Bargagli.

is much sickness in Rome. "Imagine if I can be happy when I can rest neither by night nor day. The baby is well and resembles you. He is as white as snow, but his head is like a bit of black velvet, and he is hairy as you are. And his resemblance to you makes me think him beautiful, and he is as lively as though he were a year old, and he opened his eyes before he was quite born, and made his voice heard all over the house. Our little girl is not at all well. Be sure to come back."[1] All the family letters still extant clearly prove that Marietta remained an affectionate wife and mother to the close of her life. And although we have not one of Machiavelli's letters to her, yet it is plain from the tenour of those written to his children, that, notwithstanding a few infidelities, some real and some merely imaginary, he too loved his wife to the last, and was a much better man in his own home than he wishes us to suppose.

There exists another correspondence of his of the same epoch with Giovanni Vernacci, son of his sister Primerana, who had gone to Pera on commercial business. This correspondence allows us occasional glimpses of the deep sadness by which Machiavelli was then oppressed, and also of the genuine and lively affection maintained between uncle and nephew. The former, as we have seen elsewhere, confided all his troubles to Vernacci from the very beginning, then in the August of 1513, gave him loving counsels, and told him how, in addition to the other calamities of that most unlucky year, he had suffered the loss of a little girl, who had

[1] This letter was first given to the world by Signor Innocenzo Giamperi, in his book on the "Monumenti del Giardino Puccini" (Pistoia, 1845), see p 288, and afterwards in a "Strenna Poliantea con l'Almanacco delle Dame," for the year 1846, p 43 (Florence, Grand Ducal Press) It was also republished by Amico and Mordenti, but in every case very incorrectly. All give it the date of 1524, by an erroneous interpretation of the original manuscript, which only says, *on the 24th day*. It may be conjectured that the letter was written in 1506. At that time Machiavelli was absent on his second Legation to Rome, and, although, as he was bound to follow the travels of Julius II, there is no reason to suppose that he was staying in the city, yet all letters to him were sent to Rome, on account of his being accredited to that Court. The fact of his being perpetually on the move would also explain the scarcity of his letters to his family, so much complained of by Marietta. The baby must have been Lodovico, who, as we have seen, was probably the third-born; while the little girl to whom allusion is made, must have been Bartolommea. There is no reason to think that the letter could have been written in 1503, during Machiavelli's first mission to Rome, for at that time he had only one child, a son. Nor can it be of the year 1524, for although he then spent a few days near Rome and at Civita Vecchia, no child was born to him in that year, nor was Bartolommea still in her childhood. In document II of Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition we give Marietta's letter in its original form.

old palace, which is of the severe architectural type of the school of Filippo Brunelleschi and Leon Battista Alberti. The spacious halls on the ground floor are still open, as a sure refuge from midday heats or passing showers.[1] Here it were easy to forget the present, evoke the shadows of the past, and listen in imagination to the voices of those who so frequently met in this spot and whose names are so often recorded in history. Bernardo Rucellai, the founder of this pleasant resort, died in 1514.

The years immediately preceding and following 1512 had been too turbulent to leave any leisure for peaceful intellectual intercourse; therefore in those days the gardens were little frequented. Of Cosimo, Bernardo's immediate successor, history makes scanty mention, although it has a great deal to tell us of the second-born, Palla Rucellai, who filled high offices of the State, and was a zealous adherent of the Medici nearly all his life, only deserting their cause in 1537. Another brother, Giovanni, also, like the rest of the Rucellai, a friend of the Medici, to whom indeed they were bound by ties of kindred, devoted himself to letters with great success, and was the well-known author of the tragedy "Rosmunda," and of the poem "Le Api." Being the disciple and friend of the first *literati* of Florence, he began to gather them about him; but afterwards, when aspiring to the purple, naturally repaired to Rome to the court of Leo X., his cousin and friend Assuming the ecclesiastical habit, and being made a prelate, he passed the greater part of his time in Rome, remaining there even under Clement VII., who nominated him governor of the castle of St. Angelo, an office preserved by him to his death, which took place in 1525, just when he was hoping for higher promotion.

Consequently, although the Rucellai palace had been much frequented for some time, the first member of the family to organize regular meetings in the Orti, was Bernardo, Cosimo's son, who, being born in 1495, the same year that his father died, afterwards adopted his name and was known to all as Cosimino. He dedicated himself to literature, composed poetry, showed great kindness and generosity towards all his friends, and gave great hopes of his future. But he suffered from a painful disease brought on by youthful excesses, and unskilful treatment had reduced him to so crippled a condition, that he was always obliged to lie stretched in a sort of cradle, or be carried about on a litter. This

[1] *Vide* the "Curiosità storico-artistiche fiorentine," by Count Luigi Passerini (series 1 Florence, Jouhaud, 1866), the portion entitled "Degli Orti Oricellarii" The author remarks that the site of the palace only having been purchased in 1482, when L. B Alberti was already dead, it is impossible that, as many have asserted, the latter could have been the architect employed by Rucellai.

mere words, for in the midst of numerous worries, Machiavelli often found time to attend to the affairs of the attached and distant kinsman who placed such entire confidence in him.[1]

Such then was the real man, so long held up to us as a monster, alike incapable of any delicate feeling, honesty, or genuine affection.

In the meantime he continued to work and struggle against adversity and trouble, proving himself ready for any task by which he might honestly earn an addition to the family purse. In April, 1518, he went to Genoa to arrange the affairs of certain Florentine traders, by collecting their credits in that city, amounting to several thousand crowns, and then returned to his villa[2] From time to time, however, he went down into Florence, where he still had a house, upon some business requiring his attention, and where, hostile fortunes notwithstanding, he yet retained a few trusty friends, whose society gave him consolation.

As the times had gradually grown quieter, there had again sprung up in the city a few of those literary associations so general throughout Italy in the sixteenth century, forming an essential element of society in those days, and counting among the most delightful and valued pleasures of all Florentines of culture. The best renowned association at this period was the one holding its sittings in the Oricellarii Gardens, and attended by many of the first *literati* of Florence and Italy.

Bernardo Rucellai, who flourished in the second half of the fifteenth century, was the author of some Latin satires, a partizan of the Medici, and a rich and influential citizen, purchased, towards the end of the century, an orchard in Via della Scala, spent much money in building a splendid palace in it, and laid out a still more splendid garden, that was soon renowned for the beauty of its trees. At the present time we can still judge for ourselves of the palace and garden, and putting aside the strange colossal statue of Polyphemus, erected at a later date by the Medici, and sundry small stone buildings added in our days, and in curious contrast with their antique surroundings, we can form a sufficiently exact idea of the former character of the place. The trees are still in full luxuriance, and their shade still seems to invite us to thought and conversation. Between their leafy branches we still behold the elegant and harmonious lines of the

[1] *Vide* Letter of the 15th of April, 1520, first published by Prof. A. D'Ancona, and bearing the number lv. at p 1194 of the Usigli edition of the "Opere," published in Florence, 1857. *Vide* also document iv. of Appendix (III) of Italian edition, Vernacci's letter, dated 8th of May, 1521.

[2] *Vide* document v. in Appendix (III.) of Italian edition.

up continual communication by letter with the Florentine friends who were afterwards his fellow conspirators.

Among the many others frequently to be found in the Orti Oricellarii, were the two well-known historians, Jacopo Nardi and Filippo dei Nerli, the former a Medicean, the latter a republican, but still on good terms with the cardinal. All the Rucellai were often present, as well as all celebrated Italian men of letters who happened to be in Florence. Of these we will only mention Giangiorgio Trissino, that famous gentleman of Vicenza, scholar, grammarian, tragic and epic poet, author of "La Sofonisba" and the "Italia liberata dei Goti," whose name was at that time on all men's lips.[1]

It hsa been a mistake to regard these meetings as a renewal, or even a continuance, of the Platonic Academy. The latter expired with Ficino, and its attempted resuscitation took place at a much later date and under different auspices. Those who now frequented the *Orti Oricellarii* belonged, with the exception of Francesco da Diacceto and a few others, not only to a posterior generation, but to one of a totally different nature. Although all were admirers of antiquity, all more or less versed in ancient languages, they were not of the same stuff as the men who in the days of Lorenzo the Magnificent spent weeks and months in discussing the ideas of Plato, the style of Aristotle, the allegories of Plotinus and Porphyrius, and points of grammar and rhetoric. A few of the present men were mere politicians, practised in public affairs; the rest were poets, writers of history and Italian prose, true *literati* of the *Cinquecento*, contemporaries of Raphael, Michel Angelo, Guicciardini, and Ariosto, although being intellectually inferior to those mighty ones, and therefore less independent, they were more servile in their attachment to antiquity. Nor should it be supposed that these reunions were animated at that time by any hostility to Pope or Cardinal, notwithstanding the frequent assertions made to that effect, on account of the conspiracy afterwards formed by a few of the regular visitors to the Orti. On the contrary, the majority were friends of the Medici; and even those who afterwards conspired against them, had long been on excellent terms with them and first alienated by motives of a strictly personal nature. Then, and then only, political passion came into play. An additional proof of this may be seen in the often related incident of how Leo X. was invited to the Orti during his stay in Florence in 1515, and how Rucellai's "Rosmunda" was performed before him in honour of his visit.

[1] *Vide* the work by B Morsolin, entitled, "G. G. Trissino, o monografia di un letterato del secolo XVI. Vicenza," 1878.

misfortune, added to his affability of manner, kindly nature and active intellect, drew around him all the best friends of the Rucellai family. And they constantly visited him, in the certainty that he was always to be found either in the house or garden, where alone he could breathe the outer air.[1]

Two of the most assiduous frequenters of these meetings were Zanobi Buondelmonti and Luigi di Piero Alamanni. The latter was a poet considerably known by his lyrics, his poems of chivalry, and above all by his poetical work "La Coltivazione," in which he had sought to imitate the Georgics of Virgil and given proof of much elegance and an easy though somewhat monotonous style. These two youths, who afterwards proved themselves ardent promoters of liberty, were at that time friends of the Medici, like the majority of the circle frequenting the Oricellarii Gardens.[2] Two cousins also were frequent visitors, and these having both the same name of Francesco da Diacceto were distinguished by the colour of their clothes, as the Nero (black) and the Pagonazzo (dark red), and both belonged to the school of the learned men. The second, a son of Zanobi da Diacceto, and born in 1466, had been one of the chief followers of Ficino, had written many philosophical works, and lectured at the Studio.[3] Another Diacceto, of a different family, but a pupil of Pagonazzo and known as Il Diacettino, was also one of the most constant visitors to the Orti; he knew Greek and had obtained from the cardinal a lectureship at the Studio.[4] Like Alamanni and Buondelmonti, he was ambitious, enterprising, and very passionate. All these three were friends of a certain Giovan Battista della Palla, who, having borne a great affection to Giuliano dei Medici, hoped on that account to win a cardinal's hat, and therefore soon went away to intrigue in Rome. But, as we shall have occasion to see, he kept

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii. pp 85, 86; Nerli, "Commentarii," p 138; Passerini, "Genealogia della famiglia Rucellai" Florence, Cellini, 1861.

[2] *Vide* document vi. of Appendix (III.) of Italian edition. Letter from Luigi Alamanni, younger brother of the Lodovico mentioned above, to his father, dated from Rome, 7th of January, 1518 It shows that at this time the Alamanni were still on the best terms with the Medici.

[3] He died in 1522, and a memoir of him from the pen of Benedetto Varchi was published with F. da Diacceto's work, "I tre libri d'amore," at Venice (Giolito), in 1561.

[4] Among the masses of papers left by Varchi, comprising the rough sketches and notes made by him in preparation for his Histories, there is a note to the effect that this Diacceto "was not related to Francesco, his family having sprung from a different root. But he was always his great friend and pupil, and indeed attended his lectures while studying Greek." Florence National Library, 9, f 11. The lectureship at the Studio is mentioned by Nardi and others. Nerli and Nardi give many particulars of those frequenting the Orti at this period.

from blame when their minds were found to be inflamed to the pitch of bold and dangerous enterprises in favour of liberty.[1]

This enthusiastic reception is easily accounted for. Machiavelli was a genuine admirer of the ancients; but in studying their works his own independence of intellect had remained intact, so that his words impressed these hearers—mostly servile imitators of antique models—as the revelation of an inner conscience. In the midst of this Medicean band, he, who could neither speak nor write in opposition to his real sentiments, openly declared his love of liberty, his enthusiasm for the Roman Republic. Nor did this provoke any scandal. At that time every learned Italian felt admiration for ancient Rome; every true Florentine was a republican at heart, and the Medici themselves feigned to govern Florence as a republic and promised to revert more and more to republican forms. Machiavelli, therefore, spoke frankly, and freely expounded his ideas before these youths; gave vent to his enthusiasm and continually recurred to his favourite scheme of a Militia Ordinance for the arming of the people. By examples from ancient history, he taught how Italy might be armed in such fashion as to be able to repel foreign invasion and preserve the national dignity and independence.

These were the same arguments afterwards embodied in his "Art of War," and read to his young friends in course of composition. In fact, this new work, that we shall soon have to pass in review, is arranged in the form of dialogues held in the Oricellarii Gardens between the principal frequenters of those meetings The enthusiasm Machiavelli awakened by these speeches and readings continued to increase; but, being absorbed in his subject and carried away by the current of his ideas, he was not aware that his words sometimes acted on the minds of his youthful hearers as sparks upon gunpowder, and might well have an equally perilous effect. Accordingly, he used to return quietly to his country solitude, and note down the questions discussed for future readings and arguments.

All this did him no injury with the Medici; on the contrary, it caused him to be considered in Strozzi's phrase, "*una persona per sorgere*" (a rising man). In fact, he was already much spoken of in the Cardinal's circle. This prelate who, when in Rome, had formerly interrogated him through Vettori as to the general state of Italian politics, now urged him to write on the best way of reforming the government of Florence, and to address his discourse to Leo X., the *de facto* lord of the city. It was then the custom of the Medici, and especially of Cardinal Giulio, to

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol ii. p. 86.

These meetings were at their most flourishing point when Machiavelli first joined them, and his attendance was certainly no sign of alienation from the Medici cause, but rather indeed of the reverse. And in fact we find that not long after this he was introduced to the Medici household. On the 17th of March, 1519, Filippo Strozzi wrote from Rome to his brother Lorenzo: "I am well content that you have taken Machiavello to the Medici house, for if he can gain a little favour with the masters he is a person who will rise in the world."[1] On the one hand, this letter serves to confirm what we have said concerning the company in the Oricellarii Gardens; on the other, it explains how Cardinal dei Medici was just beginning to show some friendliness to Machiavelli. And if it was only at this juncture that the author of the "Prince" gained a footing in the Medici halls, that also proves how very exaggerated, or rather entirely supposititious, were the intimate relations, alleged by many writers to have existed, between him and Lorenzo and Giuliano.

Naturally Machiavelli was now very well received in the Oricellarii Gardens; Cosimino in particular admired him greatly, drawn to him by a sincere feeling of affection that was heartily reciprocated. It was to him and Zanobi Buondelmonti that Machiavelli dedicated the "Discourses," to him that he alluded with earnest grief in "The Art of War," soon after Cosimino's premature death.

In the midst of these new friends the ex-secretary began to give readings from his "Discourses" They were received with much favour and led to many animated discussions, which always ended by his hearers urging him to devote himself with untiring energy to the work he had undertaken, the which, as Nardi said, was "of a new argument, never (that I know) essayed by any other." And he goes on to say that the new guest was so much beloved by those young men, that they even found a delicate mode of assisting him, for they took unspeakable delight in his conversation, and so greatly admired his writings, that he was not held entirely free

[1] Florence Archives, "Carte Strozzi-Uguccioni," file 108, at c. 40*t*. Machiavelli's friend, Filippo Strozzi, had been the pupil of Marcello Adriani, and was related to the Medici by his marriage with Clarice, daughter of Piero dei Medici and Alfonsina Orsini. This fact may perhaps explain how it was that, so far back as 1512, when Machiavelli had no personal acquaintance with the Medici, he should yet have addressed some of his writings to them. (*Vide* vol. ii. p. 183 and fol. of *Italian edition of this work*.) And the letter "*to a lady*," supposed by many to be addressed to Alfonsina (vol ii. p. 183, note 1), was far more probably written to Clarice dei Medici, Filippo's wife. Filippo's letter quoted above is dated from Rome, 17th of March, 1519. But it is uncertain whether the year is indicated after the Roman or the Florentine style.

serve their power even after the death of those popes, whereas the Duke of Valentinois had met his fall by aspiring to a new and extensive State. "And the reason of this is clear to us, for if it be a hard matter for private individuals to acquire great States, so it is harder still to maintain them, because of the infinite difficulties in which a new principality is involved."[1] It is plain by this that Guicciardini was not only entirely opposed to Machiavelli's illusions with regard to Cæsar Borgia, but even to the fundamental idea of the "Prince" and to the counsels already offered by him to the Medici through Vettori, on the formation of a new State at Parma and Modena.

In Guicciardini's opinion, the Medici would have done far better and acted more wisely in renouncing these hazardous dreams, and solely studying how to preserve their power in Florence. To that end it was requisite to form a nucleus of sure and faithful friends, well acquainted with the humours of the city and therefore fitted to afford help and advice. "Without trusting in them too blindly, and always keeping your hand on the curb, it is yet necessary to grant them power and favours. By favours we are safe to gain the goodwill of all men; since these are no longer the times of the Greeks and Romans when men were satisfied with empty glory. At the present day there is no one in Florence so attached to liberty as not to be ready to accept any other kind of government, provided he can obtain a greater share in it and an easier life than under the republic; while, as regards the bulk of the citizens, it is sufficient to be thrifty, so as not to overburden them with taxes, to take heed that the common law be justly administered, to protect the weak against the strong, to show courtesy to all. Then, as to those who advise hasty assumption of absolute rule over the city, without any shadow of moderation or freedom, it must be remembered that such would be the worst plan of all to adopt in Florence, the most full of suspicion and difficulty, and also in the long run a very cruel and therefore dangerous method for all parties[2]

Such were the counsels offered to the Medici by Guicciardini; very different were those given by Machiavelli now that his turn had come to be interrogated[3] In point of fact, he advised neither more nor less than the re-establishment of the republic, while yet

[1] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol ii p 329.
[2] "Opere Inedite," vol. ii, "Discourse" v. p. 325 and fol.
[3] "Discourse touching the reform of the government of Florence, written at the instance of Pope Leo X" "Opere," vol iv. p. 105 and fol. Although in the printed editions it is stated that this Discourse was made *ad istanza di Papa Leone X*, yet from internal evidence it is clear that Machiavelli was directly interrogated by the Cardinal, but not by the Pope.

interrogate persons of influence in this fashion; just as it was a favourite custom of the Florentines to note down their opinions on daily events and on reforms to be effected in the government, in order to meet the wishes of the ever restless city. Accordingly we are possessed of no inconsiderable number of discourses of this kind, written at this period, and of varied degrees of eloquence, boldness, and sagacity.

At an earlier part of this work,[1] we have seen how Guicciardini, when in Spain in 1512, already foretelling the overthrow of Soderini, but still ignorant of the restoration of the Medici, had composed a discourse, in which with very great acumen he suggested various plans for increasing the strength and safety of the republic. Soon after, on learning the altered conditions of the city, he wrote another, in which, without too plainly showing his readiness to change sides, he expounded the methods whereby the Medici might best consolidate their rule[2] He treated the same subject with more frankness and at greater length in a third Discourse, composed in 1516, three years after he had returned to Florence and become one of the warmest adherents of the Medici. "The Medici," he then wrote, "possessed themselves of the city against the will and desire of the majority of its inhabitants." The election of Leo X. had, it was true, effected a change in favour of the new rulers; nevertheless, it was still expedient for them to make sagacious provision for the future, in order to avoid the risk of being suddenly exposed to very grave dangers. The chief obstacle to such provision lay in the indifference of Giuliano and Lorenzo, who being absorbed in loftier ambitions paid little attention to Florence, designing rather to erect themselves a State elsewhere. And this was a perilous dream, since it could not be carried out without encountering insurmountable difficulties.

For although Florence was apparently a republic, the Medici had a far stronger and more assured dominion there than any they could hope to establish at Parma, Modena, or elsewhere. It was well for them to remember that the nephews of Calixtus III. and Pius II., by being content with little had been able to pre-

[1] Page 80 and fol.

[2] The first of these Discourses stands third in the "Opere Inedite" (vol. ii. p. 262 and fol) bears the date of 27th of August, with the addition in Guicciardini's hand: "In Spain, anno 1512, and I was near to the end (of my discourse) when I had news that the Medici had entered Florence." The second comes after and therefore stands fourth in the "Opere Inedite" (vol. ii. p. 316 and fol). They are preceded by two others, relating to events of 1495, and that may be regarded as literary exercises, of which Guicciardini wrote a good number, and often for the purpose of using them in his Histories as he has sometimes actually done.

tutions. "These mixed governments," he says, "ever prove very feeble, being open to injury at so many points. A kingdom is ruined by inclining towards a republic, a republic by inclining towards a kingdom. But mixed governments fall to ruin on all sides, whether tending towards a republic or a principality. There are many that extol the government of Cosimo and Lorenzo, and would fain establish another in its likeness at the present day. But that government was not exempt from the defects and dangers we have noted in the others, and such defects would be vastly augmented at the present day. For in those times the Medici were reared and educated in the city, were thoroughly acquainted with it, and ruled it with a familiarity that is no longer possible to them now they have become mighty potentates. The majority of the citizens were favourable to them then, but now are against thèm. Nor were there formerly so many armed sovereigns in Italy as at present, against whom no weak government could oppose any resistance. Many men assert that Florence cannot remain without a head; but they do not reflect that there may be an official head and a private head. No one can doubt that if a private head had to be chosen, all would prefer one of the Medici house. But if choice had to be made between a public and private leader, the Florentines would always give the preference to a public one, that is: to a magistrate elected by the citizens. At all events it is certain that, in Florence, where the love of equality is so great, it would be impossible to establish a principality without making violent changes. And inasmuch as this would be not only a difficult but also an inhuman and cruel proceeding, it must be deemed unworthy by all desiring a reputation for mercy and goodness. I will therefore put aside all mention of a principality and will treat of a republic, the more that your Holiness is understood to be well disposed to the latter and only hesitating because you desire a government ensuring the maintenance of your great authority in Florence and the safety of your friends. As it seems to me that I have conceived a fitting plan, I have sought to explain my idea to you, so that you may use it, if of any value, and likewise recognize thereby the quality of my devotion to yourself."[1]

In its general outline Machiavelli's idea was very simple; *i.e.*, that of founding a genuine republic, while leaving the choice of magistrates in the hands of the Medici for the present. Thus the

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 112, 113. Even from these words it is plain that Machiavelli had received no direct and special invitation from the Pope to write upon this matter, otherwise he would certainly have said at this point that it was his duty to reply. There are other expressions, further on, indicating, as it seems to us, that the invitation had proceeded from the Cardinal.

endeavouring to arrange some way in which the Pope and Cardinal might retain their actual power for life, since he well knew that, in default of such arrangement, all his proposals would go for nothing. On this account many have charged him with inconsistency, urging against him that, after having suggested in the "Prince" an absolute form of government to Giuliano and Lorenzo dei Medici, he now counselled Pope Leo X. to adopt that of a republic. But all trace of inconsistency disappears when it is remembered that the "Prince" was written to demonstrate the possibility of erecting a new State by force; and how, once erected in Italy, it might be aggrandized so as to include the whole of the Peninsula. But now Giuliano and Lorenzo, the men to whom these counsels had been addressed, were both dead, and Machiavelli was interrogated by the Cardinal with reference to a new and very different scheme. It was no longer a question of building up a new state at Parma, Modena, or elsewhere; it was simply a question of governing Florence. Machiavelli had frequently asserted in the "Discourses," in his private letters and in nearly all his political works, that although in northern and southern Italy no government but that of a monarchy was now possible, and that a monarchy alone could, in those parts, establish a new State or unite the whole country, yet that as regarded Tuscany alone, and more especially Florence, no government but that of a republic could enduringly succeed on account of the old customs and great equality of the citizens.

Florence alone was in question at this moment, and even the Pope and the Cardinal appeared convinced that all the Florentines more or less desired a republic. And as neither of these churchmen had any legitimate heir, and both knew for certain that, at their own death, the direct line of Cosimo the Elder and Lorenzo the Magnificent would be extinct, so they only feigned to shrink from decisive steps towards a republic, in order not to renounce their absolute protectorate during their lifetime. Whether these sentiments were true or assumed, they declared them openly and made them believed by many. Machiavelli was convinced of having discovered the solution of the hard problem of the safe establishment of liberty, together with the absolute protectorate for life of Pope and Cardinal. And with this object in view he wrote his new "Discourse."

He starts, therefore, by investigating the causes of the instability of all the successive governments of Florence, and attributes them to the fact that all these governments having been organized in favour of a party rather than for the general welfare, were always a hybrid and precarious jumble of monarchical and republican insti-

Eight of "Pratica," who were intrusted with war affairs and hence with the Militia Ordinance. This latter was ever the institution he had most at heart. The Medici had suppressed it in 1512, and then recalled it to temporary existence by a decree of the 19th of May, 1514, under the name of Ordinance of the Territory[1] ("Ordinanza del Contado").

Machiavelli would not dwell upon the subject at a moment when it was very inopportune to speak of arming the people, but determined to recur to it later, after having succeeded in obtaining the re-establishment of the Republic. For the present, therefore, he left the "Otto di Pratica" and the militia untouched, only suggesting that the latter should be divided into two bodies, to each of which should be attached a commissary nominated every two years by the Pope. And Pope and Cardinal were also, with the authority and consent of the whole Florentine people, to elect the Gonfalonier, the Signory, the Two Hundred, and all other magistrates. This was to be the means of investing them with supreme power during their life, in order that all power might pass to the people after their death.

But the last and most important part of the reform still remained to be considered, namely, that of satisfying the bulk of

[1] This decree is to be found in the Florence Archives, "Balie" (1512–26), No 58; and according to the old classification: class xi. dist. 18, No. 19, at c. 157[t]. He begins with the statement that the Gonfalonier and Signory of Florence deem it well to "make provision that the State may be long preserved and rendered entirely secure against any injury and especially against any sudden attack. That they believe this may be easily assured, whenever their own people are well armed and organized, and no attempt made to rely upon foreign arms and mercenaries." Therefore the militia is re-established; and it is decreed that ten thousand foot soldiers are to be enlisted under the flags of the territory and district (contado e distretto), and that their superintendence is to be entrusted to "the magistrate of the respectable Ten of 'Balìa,' and in case of that magistrate not being forthcoming, to the magistrate of the respectable Eight of 'Pratica'" This provision was made because at that time it was already determined to suppress the Ten and replace them by the Eight of "Pratica," who, in fact, entered office on the 10th of June of the same year. The letters of the Ten come to an end on the 9th of June, 1514, and the first two vols of the letters of the "Otto di Pratica" (Nos 28 and 29 according to the new classification, and according to the old: class x. dist. 5, Nos. 49 and 50) all bear the following title: "Alter ex libris litterarum intra Dominium scriptarum per magn[cos] Octoviros Pratice Reip. Flo[ne], inceptus die X[ma] junii mdxiiij, qua die incepit officium dicti Octoviratus, et est primus magistratus, &c." Lorenzo dei Medici, the Pope's nephew, was a member of the first Eight The two vols. quoted run from 1514 to 1516 and complete each other. The first letter is of the 13th of June, 1514. The decree quoted above was only partially and unwillingly carried out. In fact, the Medici always neglected the Militia Ordinance

We must here mention that even Guicciardini spoke favourably of the Militia Ordinance in the "Discourses" from which we have previously quoted, and wished to see it enlarged and strengthened. "Opere Inedite," vol. xi.; "Discourse" iii. p. 264.

latter would retain their predominance for life; but at their decease Florence would really regain her liberty. Nor was this a novel idea, for it was precisely the means, the device, by which Cosimo and Lorenzo the Magnificent had become sole masters of the Republic. It is true that in this way they had destroyed liberty; but now the Pope was at a distance, and neither he nor the Cardinal had any successor to think of; they could not, or at least, according to Machiavelli, had no right to object, if liberty were to be veritably restored at their death. So, in short, it was only a question of trying to persuade the Medici that they might earn immortal glory if, while preserving their power in Florence for life, they would at once ensure the triumph of the Republic in the future. For the practical solution of this difficult problem, Machiavelli resorts in his "Discourses" to many contrivances rendering his proposals extremely complicated. At one moment he reverts to the old Florentine theory of the three ambitions, of the three classes of citizens to be made satisfied: those, namely, seeking to hold the first rank and command; those contented with some sort of share in the government; and the masses asking nothing but freedom and justice. He wished to suppress the whole complicated machinery of the old councils and magistracies, which, with veiled perfidy, the Medici had resuscitated from the statutes anterior to 1494; and he proposed instituting a Gonfaloniership with a Signory, Senate, and General Council. This was the form of government founded in 1494, in the time of Savonarola, and that, with slight alterations, had endured to 1512. It was, indeed, substantially the same as that suggested first by Guicciardini and then by Giannotti, although each had introduced different modifications.

Coming next to the practical mode of achieving his suggested reforms, Machiavelli began by proposing the election for life of sixty-five citizens past the age of forty-five, one of whom was to be elected Gonfalonier for two or three years, or even for life. One-half of the remaining sixty-four were to form a species of council for the Gonfalonier, holding office during one year, replaced at the end of the term by the other half, and so on in alternation. These thirty-two were to be subdivided into groups of eight citizens each, constituting the Signory proper for three months, under the presidency of the Gonfalonier. In this way the most restless ambition might be satisfied. Then came the Senate or Council of the Two Hundred, of which the members must be forty years old. Machiavelli likewise abolished many useless magistrates; but retained the Eight of "Guardia and Balia," forming a species of common court of justice, and the

benefits God has conferred upon your house and upon the person of your Holiness, the greatest is this of giving you the strength and purpose to earn immortality, and thus greatly surpass your ancestral power and glory." [1]

Although this conclusion leads us back to Machiavelli's dominant idea, and recalls the final exhortation of the "Prince," no great scientific, nor indeed great practical value can be attributed to his "Discourse" as a whole. For, it either repeats ideas already expounded by him in minuter detail elsewhere, or echoes, without comment, doctrines universally known and accepted in Florence. The form of republic proposed by him is identical in its main outline with that counselled by all at that period. As to the modifications he suggested for its improvement, his counsels are very inferior to the far more sagacious and practical advice written by Guicciardini from Spain in the first "Discourse" that we examined.[2]

The subtle contrivances by which Machiavelli sought to prepare the transition from present despotism to future liberty, were decidedly too subtle and crafty, as was later observed by Alessandro dei Pazzi when questioned in his turn by Cardinal dei Medici.[3] Even had all these contrivances been adopted, they could have scarcely achieved the desired end. A republic placed entirely in the power of a Pope such as Leo X. would either have led to immediate conflict, or increased the difficulty of really establishing freedom. Nevertheless, Machiavelli's "Discourse" is another proof of the sincerity, constancy, and depth of his attachment to liberty. After so earnestly craving the favour of the Medici, in order to obtain some public employment at their hands, no sooner do they notice him and ask his opinion than he is unable to do more than reiterate with irrepressible enthusiasm the simple exhortation that the supreme glory and fortune to be desired of mortals in this world consists in the might and determination to found a free, civilized, and powerful State. So firmly was he persuaded of this, as not to understand how others could fail to be likewise instantaneously convinced. This made him hopeful of inducing first Giuliano and then Lorenzo to become the saviour of Italy; this now made him hope to persuade Leo X to lay the foundations of the future freedom of Florence. He was deceived

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 121, 122.

[2] "Discourse" iii. in the "Opere Inedite," vol. ii p. 262 and fol.

[3] Pazzi's "Discourse" was written in 1522, and is published in the "Archivio Storico," vol. i. p 420 and fol. The author considers the form of government proposed by Machiavelli to be "of a kind unusual to that city, and extravagant" (p. 429).

the citizens. "To this end," pursued Machiavelli, with rising animation, "it is necessary to re-open the hall of the Great Council." "Without satisfying the masses no stable republic has ever been established; and the mass of Florentine citizens will never be content until the hall is re-opened; therefore, in order to ground a republic in Florence, it is requisite to re-open this hall, and restore this privilege to the masses. And your Holiness may be assured that this would be the first thing done by any enemy wishing to deprive you of the State, and therefore it would be a wiser plan for the hall to be opened on safe terms by your own hand." [1]

Hence it was necessary that the Grand Council should be reconstituted on the usual plan, and composed of a thousand, or at the least, of six hundred, citizens. There was no need to fix the mode of election, since all *beneficiati* could sit in turn, that is to say, all citizens eligible for official posts and consequently for seats in Council. The highest function of this body, besides that of sanctioning the laws, was the election of the magistrates; but these prerogatives were at present only granted to it in a very limited degree, since they were to be retained by the Medici until both Pope and Cardinal ceased to breathe, and only then be restored to the people. It was also suggested by Machiavelli that the Medici should occasionally summon the Council to a wider, or rather to the full exercise of its rights in order that the people might be gradually trained to liberty; and in this, indeed, lay the main gist of his "Discourse."

"By these measures," so he said in conclusion, addressing Pope and Cardinal with ever-increasing fervour, "you become absolute lords of all. You nominate the chief magistrates, the Gonfalonier, the Signory, the Two Hundred; you legislate with the authority of the whole people; everything depends upon your will; nor, during your life, does this government in any way differ from a monarchy. At your death you bequeath to your country a genuine, free Republic, that will owe its existence to you." "I hold that the greatest honour to be attained by men, is that which is voluntarily conferred upon them by their country; I hold that the greatest good that can be accomplished and the most grateful to God, is that which is done to our country. Besides, no men win so much praise for their deeds as those who have reformed republics and kingdoms by means of laws and institutions: these are the men who, next to the gods, have most been extolled. . . . Therefore, Heaven can grant no greater gift to mortal man, nor point out to him a more glorious path than this; and amid the many

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. p. 117.

vention of the political arm. Unless this could be obtained the whole of Michele Guinigi's patrimony would be held in trust for his children who were minors, and their guardians legally authorized to refuse payment to the Florentine creditors. After prolonged negotiation, Machiavelli succeeded in persuading the General Council of Lucca to place the matter in the hands of the Praetor and three arbitrators who were to examine the accounts. It could thus be ascertained which were *bonâ fide* contracts for justifiable debts, which fictitious, and on all doubtful points they could apply to the Elders of the Republic, who in their turn would again bring the matter before the General Council.[1]

Being detained in Lucca several months by this business, Machiavelli as usual spent his time in studying his surroundings and taking notes of all that he saw. In fact, there has come down to us a "Summary of the affairs of the city of Lucca,"[2] that must have been written by him at this period. It is a hasty and somewhat incorrect sketch; but contains many apposite reflections. The Signory, he tells us, was composed of nine citizens and the Gonfalonier, who were changed every two months and not eligible for re-election within two years. Then there was a council of thirty-six, renewed every six months; the citizens composing it during the first half year could not be re-elected for the second, but were eligible for the succeeding term. The General Council sat for a year, and consisted of seventy-two members,[3] elected by the Signory, and twelve other citizens nominated by the thirty-six and forbidden to sit two years in succession. The Signory exercised very great authority over the territory, which, according to the republican custom of those times, enjoyed no political liberty; but had very little power within the city, where it was only competent to convoke councils, and bring forward decrees prepared in the *Pratiche*, or, as they were called at Lucca, *Colloquii*

[1] Several documents relating to this affair are included among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case i. No. 60, and were published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. vi pp. 267–276. These are: a petition from the Florentine merchants to the Signory of Lucca, undated; a second petition from the same, dated . . . September, 1520; a memorandum for Niccolò Machiavelli, by an unknown hand, giving him detailed information of the whole affair; a *note of things to be clearly remembered as to the transactions of Michele Guinigi*; finally, the sentence of the General Council of Lucca. All these documents, excepting the third, are in Machiavelli's handwriting. In document vii of Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition, we subjoin a couple of letters from G. B. Bracci to Machiavelli, dated 14th of August and 7th of September, 1520, upon the same question, which complete the series of documents connected with this affair.

[2] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 124–133.

[3] This was his first mistake, for there were 90 and not 72 members, who with the substitutes, also mentioned by Machiavelli, formed a Council of 120. So at least it is stated by the Statute of 1446, still in vigour at that time.

in both cases, but nevertheless neither resigned his faith nor renounced his intention of renewing the attempt. At this moment the Pope attached no importance to proposals mainly offered to him at the instigation of the Cardinal.[1] Thus both Pontiff and prelate made use of dissertations of this kind, and, directly and indirectly, frequently invited them, for the sole purpose of quieting the hottest lovers of liberty by throwing a sop to their hopes and illusions.

The Cardinal was now desirous to attract Machiavelli. He was already personally acquainted with him; and had begun to correspond with him and to accord him certain favours. Better times, therefore, seemed about to dawn upon the ex-secretary; but the signs were still so slight and the favours so small, as occasionally to procure him more humiliation than pleasure. In the year 1520 he was employed for the first time by the Signory and the Cardinal as Commissioner to Lucca, to arrange the affairs of certain Florentine traders holding a credit of sixteen hundred florins on one Michele Guinigi of that city, who refused payment. This was a private affair that might have been settled by the common tribunals, but complications had grown out of it requiring the intervention of the two governments. Guinigi had inherited a large fortune from his father; but, as it was known that he would speedily dissipate this patrimony, the greater part had been entailed to his children. In fact, besides the debts he had contracted with Florentines and others in the course of his business, he had already lost large sums at the gambling-table, and was therefore unable to satisfy his creditors. Accordingly, permission was now asked of the Lucchese Republic to place the affair in the hands of special arbitrators, authorized either to cancel or at least put aside the gambling debts, so as to give absolute precedence to the commercial obligations. Only in this case would the kinsmen and guardians of Guinigi's children promise to be liable for the trade debts, and they would in no case consent to pay the sums lost at play. But these gambling debts having been attested in proper legal form, they could not be set aside without the inter-

[1] At the close of this "Discourse" Machiavelli seems to positively refer the Pope to information the Cardinal was to give him *vivâ voce*. He tells his Holiness that unless timely precautions be taken, the condition of Florence may at any moment expose the Medici to a thousand unexpected dangers, and in the meantime already causes them numerous vexations insupportable to any one; "and for these vexations his most reverend Eminence the Cardinal can vouch, as he has spent the past months in Florence" ("Opere," vol. iv. p. 122). This seems to additionally confirm the fact of the invitation having proceeded from the Cardinal. Besides, contemporary historians agree that it was he who interrogated the citizens and gave them to believe that the Pope had authorized him to do so.

"Unless some such magistrature be established," he said, "the smaller suits of daily occurrence will be always neglected, much to the harm and peril of liberty. In fact, even at Lucca it has been found necessary to pass a special law, known as the Scapegrace law, by which in September and March the Councils jointly decree the expulsion from the State for three years of a certain number of the more dangerous young men. This generally served as a check, but nevertheless proved useless against the insolence of the Poggio family, which was more alarming than any other." This short summary, as may easily be seen, is of no great value; but it proves Machiavelli's constant habit of seizing every opportunity of studying the institutions and political machinery of other States, whether near or distant, and of trying to discover and suggest means for their improvement.

But these studies did not fill up much of his time, and he was therefore obliged to seek additional employment. He received various letters at this period, and among them one from Cardinal dei Medici, dated the last day of July, and beginning with the words: *Spectabilis vir, amice mi carissime.* In this he was desired to obtain the expulsion from Lucca of three students of the Pisan University, who had been already expelled thence for bad conduct.[1] His friends of the Oricellarii Gardens sometimes sent him serious, sometimes facetious letters praying for his speedy return, and his children urged this still more warmly both in their own name and that of their mother, Marietta.[2] But Machiavelli was unable to leave until the affair in his charge had been brought to some conclusion, and accordingly profited by his leisure at Lucca to compose his short and well-known work, entitled, the "Life of Castruccio Castracani." On the 29th of August he sent this book to his friend Zanobi Buondelmonti, having dedicated it to him and to Luigi Alamanni *suoi amicissimi.* And as early as the 6th of September Buondelmonti replied that he had received and read it with Alamanni and other friends, who were all very much pleased with it.[3]

[1] This letter is given twice in different shapes in the "Opere" (P. M.). At p. 88 of vol. i. it is printed pretty correctly, excepting as to the date; *Ex Florentia ultima junii* MDXXX., which is incorrect. In vol vi., at p. 210, the date is correctly given: *Ex Palatio fiorentino* (although the original has it: *Ex Florentia*) *ultima julii* MDXX., but the letter contains several mistakes And it is also an error to say that it is to be found in the "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 51, for it is in No 41, as noted in vol. i.

[2] *Vide* Italian edition, documents viii and ix. of Appendix (III.), where we give a letter dated 30th of July, from Bernardo Machiavelli to his father at Lucca, and another to the same from Filippo dei Nerli, dated 1st of August, 1520. Several others of the same period were published in the "Opere" (P. M.).

[3] Buondelmonti's letter is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 43, and was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p lxxxvii.

(conversations), in which the wisest citizens were invited to take part. The General Council constituted the real government of the city, for it had power to make laws and treaties, to pronounce sentence of death without appeal; and its motions were carried by a majority of three-fourths of the votes. Nevertheless there was a Potestà exercising authority in civil and criminal suits.[1]

Machiavelli observes that this Lucca government worked well, notwithstanding some defects. He approves of the Signory having but little authority over the citizens, "for such has always been the practice of good republics, inasmuch as the chief magistrate can easily abuse his power, if he be not held in check. Neither had the Roman Consuls, nor have the Doge and Signory of Venice any power over citizens' lives." Still, the Signory of Lucca lacked fitting dignity, according to Machiavelli; "because the brief term of office and the numerous exclusions compelled the nomination of persons of small account. Thus it was continually necessary to recur in the *Colloqui* to the advice of private citizens, the which is not customary in well-organized republics, wherein the greatest number distributes office, the medium number gives advice, the minority executes." Such indeed was then considered the fundamental rule and necessary basis of every regular government, there being no exact idea at that time of the modern division of power. Accordingly, Machiavelli went on to say: "Thus did the people, Senate, and Consuls of Rome; thus do now in Venice the Grand Council, the Pregadi, the Signory. But at Lucca, on the contrary, these orders are confused, for the medium number, that is the Council of Thirty-six, distributes office; the Seventy-two and the Signory are partly advisers, partly executants of the law. Yet in practice even this leads to little mischief, for the same reason mentioned above, namely, that the magistrates are slightly considered on account of their lack of dignity, and rich men chiefly concern themselves with their own private affairs. Nevertheless, this order of things is not to be recommended." He then proceeds to approve of the General Council's power of life and death over the citizens, because, in his opinion, such power is a great check on the ambition of persons of importance, who would never be condemned by a small tribunal. Still, he would prefer that, as in Florence, there should be a bench of four or six magistrates, to decide the smaller civil and criminal disputes of the citizens, leaving to the Potestà the charge of political trials and of all others devolved upon him by the Statutes.

[1] The printed edition gives the words *potestà fiorentino*, but this must certainly be a misprint for *potestà forestiero*. For Florentines and their subjects were always excluded in Lucca from every office that had to be held by foreigners.

wealth. The method by which Castruccio, little by little, first with the aid of Uguccione della Faggiuola, lord of Pisa, and then in opposition to his will, succeeded in becoming tyrant of Lucca, is recounted by Machiavelli with greater truthfulness. But the battle of Montecatini, where the Florentines were defeated, and Castruccio fought so valiantly under the banner of Uguccione that the latter's jealousy was aroused and his friendship turned to enmity, is described in a very arbitrary fashion. Machiavelli makes Uguccione fall ill—although, on the contrary, he was at the head of the army—in order to give the command to Castruccio, and attributes to him, in his usual way, a wholly imaginary plan of battle. And after Castruccio has become lord of Lucca, and head of the Tuscan Ghibellines through the death of Uguccione, there follows a narrative of the stratagems by which he suppressed a rebellion in that city.

Here again Machiavelli imitates Diodorus, by attributing to his hero the same conduct pursued by Agathocles in extinguishing his enemies, and so often mentioned and recommended by himself in the pages of the "Prince" and the "Discourses." According to Diodorus Siculus, Agathocles, having first, as captain of the Syracusans, collected a great army, then summoned the heads of the Council of Six Hundred, under pretext of asking their advice, and put them all to death. He next roused the people against the nobles they hated, and thus about four thousand persons were massacred. According to Machiavelli, Stefano di Poggio first joined the rebels in Lucca, then quieted them, so that on Castruccio's return from the camp, he presented himself to the latter, showed him that all was tranquil, thanks to his efforts, and spoke in favour of his friends and relations. Castruccio gave him a kindly welcome, and invited him to bring his friends. But when they came before him, confiding in his pledged word, all were seized and put to death, after which he likewise slaughtered many others who seemed likely to aspire to the highest rank, and thus at last was safely established as lord of Lucca [1]

Even the narrative of the means by which Castruccio gained possession of Pistoia, is entirely fictitious. According to Machiavelli, the tyrant came to terms with the leaders of the two factions dividing the city, making both believe that he would march in on a certain night to oppose their adversaries. But when the moment came, at a given signal, he attacked both parties, vanquished them and had them all put to death. The city was then summoned to yield in Castruccio's name, and surrendered to him together with the outlying territory, "so that," says Machiavelli in conclusion,

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 413.

It is a well-known fact that, even as his other works, this one aroused much doubt and dispute. By some it was styled a romance, by others an imitation of Xenophon's "Cyropædia," and so on. It certainly is not history, as may be ascertained by all who care to compare it with any narrative of the best-known authentic facts. The author composed the biography of an imaginary personage, to whom he gave the name of Castruccio Castracani, and filled it, partly with incidents from the latter's life, as related in history, and partly with those derived from the life of Agathocles in books xix. and xx. of Diodorus Siculus, with the addition of sundry particulars of his own invention. The real Castruccio was a legitimate scion of the noble family of the Antelminelli; he was born in 1281, and at an early age shared the banishment of his father Geri, at Ancona. On the death of his parents, he went to the wars in Flanders, together with Alberto Scotti and Musciatto Franzesi in the service of Philip the Beautiful. In 1310 he was fighting in Lombardy on the side of the Visconti.

Machiavelli's narrative, on the contrary, begins by asserting that extraordinary men are nearly always of low and obscure birth, because destiny likes to show its might in this way; and then goes on to relate how a certain Canon Castracani and his sister Dianora, who lived with him, found a forsaken baby in their garden and brought it up in their own house, and that this child was the famous Castruccio. Showing an aptitude for arms, he was trained by Messer Francesco Guinigi, and taken by him to the Lombard wars, where from the age of eighteen he began to be distinguished for his valour. Now this Canon and his sister are wholly fictitious personages, and equally fictitious is the fable of the foundling discovered in the garden. Besides, the real Castruccio was away from Italy at the age of eighteen; nor is there any Francesco Guinigi that could have played the part narrated by Machiavelli. But, according to Diodorus Siculus, Agathocles was abandoned by his father. His mother found him after some days, and carried him to her brother, by whom he was reared. Later, Agathocles found a protector in a nobleman, who gave him a post in the army, in which he quickly gained distinction by his valour.

Machiavelli goes on to relate how, directly after Castruccio's return to Lucca from Lombardy, Messer Francesco Guinigi died, and, leaving a son of thirteen named Paolo, chose Castruccio as the boy's guardian and governor of his estates. Paolo, like his father, and indeed the whole episode, is an imaginary figure borrowed from Diodorus, who narrates that Agathocles married the widow of his protector, and thus exchanged poverty for

theoretical demonstration in the "Art of War," as we shall soon have occasion to see. In the "Life of Castruccio" he tried to bring it within general comprehension by illustrating it with imaginary examples, to which, for the sake of greater effect, he gave an historical colouring.

Meanwhile, Fortune, the everlasting ruler of human events—thus continues Machiavelli—after having thus far favoured Castruccio, now determined, the better to prove her power, to bring his life to a sudden end by a fever that struck him down after the last of his glorious battles. Feeling the approach of death, he sent for his hypothetical successor and addressed him in the following terms: "Had I foreseen that fate would check my course half way, I would have bequeathed thee a smaller State and fewer enemies But fate is arbiter in all things, and has neither granted me sufficient judgment to foresee her will, nor sufficient time to overcome it. I abstained from marriage in order to show gratitude to the race of thy father, my protector. It is now thy part to try to maintain the kingdom that I leave thee and that I acquired by force of arms." Paolo had neither the valour nor good fortune of Castruccio, and speedily forfeited his kingdom. So runs Machiavelli's tale; but all this, too, is pure romance, for, as we have already said, Castruccio left several sons, who held the State, although they lost it before long, neither the paternal sagacity nor valour being included in their inheritance.[1] This singular biography, which begins and ends by extolling the omnipotence of fate, winds up with a series of memorable sayings attributed to Castruccio. Many writers believed that nearly all these were derived from the Apothegms of Plutarch; but it has been recently proved that a considerable

[1] For Castruccio's life, the following are the authorities to be consulted: "Vita Castruccii Antelminelli lucencis ducis, auctore Nicalao Tegrimo una cum etrusca versione Georgii Dati," Lucae, 1742; "Le attioni di Castruccio Castracani degli Antelminelli, Signore di Lucca," &c., Roma, Gigliucci; Pignotti, "Storia della Toscana," libro iii. at conclusion. Signor F. L Polidori included an "Esame critico della vita di Castruccio Castracani" in his edition of the "Opere Minori" of Machiavelli (Florence, Le Monnier, 1852), *vide* p 33 and fol. In this study, the author notes the historical blunders contained in Machiavelli's work, and to which other writers had long before begun to call attention Many had observed that in this work Machiavelli had borrowed from the ancients. But we believe that Signor C. Triantafillis was the first to prove that the narrative was partly derived from the life of Agathocles related by Diodorus Siculus. *Vide* "Sulla vita di Castruccio Castracani scritta da Niccolò Machiavelli, ricerche" by C. Triantafillis This work was first published in the "Archivio Veneto," tom. x. part 1. 1875; and afterwards as a separate pamphlet (Venice, Commercio Press, 1875).

"every one, being full of hope, and chiefly stirred by his *virtue*, subsided into quiet."[1] There is not a word of truth in this account. Pistoia was surrendered by Filippo Tedici, chief of the city. Finding himself too weak to resist Castruccio, the Florentines, and his enemies within the walls, all at the same time, he tricked the second and gave himself up to the first, who appointed him his captain and gave him his daughter to wife. Such, at least, is the version narrated in the far more credible "Storie Pistolesi." Among other things Machiavelli assigns neither wife nor children to Castruccio, although he was not only married, but the father of a family.

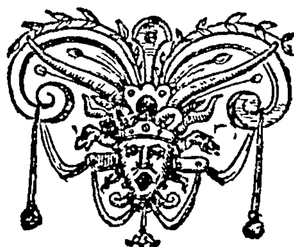
The capture of Pistoia was actually succeeded by two battles, forming the most important events of Castruccio's military career The first and chief was that of Altopascio (1325), in which the Florentines were completely defeated. Yet Machiavelli, who has given a detailed account of this battle in his "Histories," says no word of it here. After several other military enterprises, Castruccio, now Duke of Lucca, Volterra, Pistoia, &c., and Imperial Vicar at Pisa, found himself in Rome, whither he had gone with Louis the Bavarian. Here he learnt that the Florentines had retaken Pistoia. Hastening to Lucca, he collected an army, besieged Pistoia, and at the same time defeated the Florentines who tried to rescue the city. Yet Machiavelli has nothing to say of this campaign, the second in importance in Castruccio's real life, and narrates sham battles instead. According to him, Castruccio, having led his army from Lucca, encountered the Florentines at Serravalle, and he gives a most minute description of a battle that never took place there, and in which Castruccio is supposed to have proved the splendour of his military genius by routing the enemy. Thus again master of Pistoia, he hurried towards Pisa, where a conspiracy had broken out. On the way he met the Florentines, who fell upon him with a very numerous army at Fucecchio, and we are then treated to a most complete description of another imaginary battle, in which Castruccio's genius is again resplendent, and the Florentines are beaten once more. These two narratives, which, by the way, are contradicted by Machiavelli's own "Histories," serve to show even more clearly than elsewhere that his "Vita di Castruccio" was intended for a miniature politico-military romance, and written to prove, among other things, the great superiority in warfare of infantry *versus* cavalry. This was always Machiavelli's favourite theory, and it was also a correct one. He had long before alluded to it in the "Discourses," and had recently enlarged upon it, and given its

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 414.

Gardens had perused the new work, and encouraged Machiavelli to persevere in historical writing, "because in this your style is more elevated than in treating of other themes." But while all were agreed on that point, "every one hesitated and doubted as to the history itself and as to the explanation of your meaning and conceptions" Buondelmonti also remarked, and not without justice, that the sayings assigned to Castruccio seemed too numerous, the more especially as some of them had been already "attributed to other ancient and modern stages."[1]

Undoubtedly Machiavelli's narrative proceeds with a rapid swing, an attractive limpidity and freshness of style, for these gifts never failed him when he was dealing with the personification of his ideals. But only when we have formed a clear conception of those ideals, is it possible for us to understand how the "Life of Castruccio Castracani" took shape in his mind, or to perceive how simple and natural was his object in writing it.

[1] *Vide* letter in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. lxxxvii.



number of them are borrowed from the "Life of Aristippus" by Diogenes Laertius.[1]

From all that we have said, it seems to us that Machiavelli's object in writing this work is sufficiently plain. Being in Lucca, it was only in accordance with his usual habit that he should study the history of the place, and his attention was naturally drawn to the character and career of Castruccio, the daring soldier and acute politician, who was the founder of a new State, and a personage of the Cæsar Borgia stamp. Just as this latter, in passing through the crucible of Machiavelli's fancy, had been transmuted into his political ideal, so too, Castruccio, still more easily transformed, being viewed from a greater distance, became his politico-military ideal. Making him almost the imaginary hero of a singular historical romance, he sought to personify in him not only some of the ideas expressed in the "Prince" and the "Discourses," but many of the theories recently expounded in his "Art of War." When the real history of Castruccio was insufficient, he reverted to that of Agathocles, and everything lacking in this was supplied by his own imagination, which, in short, served to arrange and combine all details to his own liking. It is very probable, that, as many have asserted, the "Cyropædia" of Xenophon first suggested the composition of this work. In fact, Machiavelli, when alluding to it in his "Discourses,"[2] says, that Xenophon wrote it in order to show what were the qualities possessed by and almost always essential to the success of conquering princes. But at all events, it is certain that the "Cyropædia" could only furnish general suggestions as to the nature and method of the work. As regards its main substance, its purpose and its precepts, the "Life of Castruccio" strictly appertains to Machiavelli and his times.

But it is not surprising that a work composed under similar conditions and for similar ends should have led to much dispute. Doubts and conjectures, in fact, were started from the first moment of its appearance and are still unsettled. In the letter of Zanobi Buondelmonti mentioned above, the writer spoke of the pleasure with which he and many other comrades of the Oricellarii

[1] Sig. Menagio, of the Fabricio Library, had declared that the memorable sayings attributed by Machiavelli to Castruccio were extracted from Plutarch's Apothegms; but Signor Triantafillis has quoted eleven that are clearly copied from the life of Aristippus of Diogenes Laertius, an author who—as it may be well to observe—had been already translated in the fifteenth century by Traversari.

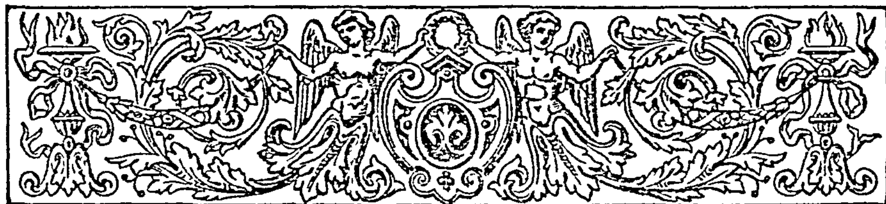
[2] "Discorsi," book ii. chap. xiii. p. 222. "Xenophon, in his life of Cyrus, shows the needfulness of deceit, considering that he makes the first expedition of Cyrus against the king of Armenia to be full of fraud, and shows that his hero occupied that kingdom by stratagem, not by force of arms"

was already published in Florence by the 16th of August, 1521.[1]

In the same way that the "Prince" is only an amplification of certain ideas already sketched out in the "Discourses," so the "Art of War" explains in detail all that was briefly mentioned in the same regarding the method of disciplining armies and leading them into action. These three works, in short, being all governed by the same idea, might easily be fused into one. The "Discourses," containing the germs of both the others, and therefore the entire political system of the author, chiefly treat of the means of establishing the liberty of the State; the "Prince" of the mode of founding a new and absolute monarchy, in order to later obtain by its aid the unity and independence of the whole country; while the "Art of War" teaches how the nation should be prepared for the defence of liberty and independence. And in all three works, even when treating the question theoretically and in general terms, Machiavelli always keeps Italy specially in view Hence all three have, not only a scientific merit, but also a practical and historic value that greatly increases the difficulty of pronouncing judgment on them. Other and stronger obstacles have to be encountered in entering on an accurate critical study of the "Art of War." Even military men can scarcely estimate the historic value of a work that is incomprehensible if regarded apart,

[1] Gamba erroneously supposes this edition to be identical with that of 1529. Both were in the Palatine and are now in the National Library of Florence. At the end of the first is the inscription: "Impresso in Firenze per li Heredi di Philippo di Giunta, nelli anni del Signore MDXXI. a di xvi d'Agosto, Leone X. Pontefice." *Vide* "Il Quarto Centenario di Niccolò Machiavelli"

Codex 1451, cl. viii, in the Florence National Library, contains long fragments of the "Arte della Guerra" in Machiavelli's handwriting. There were 183 sheets, but now several are missing, and those remaining are not in order. They go from Nos 7 to 16, from 97 to 110, from 113 to 154, from 161 to 166, from 169 to 183. The first sheet, No. 7, begins: "Cosimo Basterebbe quando io fossi certo, che la occasione." Sheet 176 contains the conclusion of the work. The sheets from 177 to 183 contain the tables, preceded by an explanatory notice to the reader. Then follow two double sheets, unnumbered, containing the author's additions and corrections Included among these fragments is a separate sheet, certainly of Machiavelli's time but not in his hand, containing the Greek alphabet with explanations in Latin It seems sufficiently clear that as Machiavelli found it necessary to use many different signs when compiling his tables, in order to indicate the disposition of the various portions of his army, and as the Latin letters did not suffice, he must have applied to a friend for the Greek alphabet, with which he himself was imperfectly acquainted. Accordingly, his friend forwarded him the alphabet in his own hand, and added explanations of the vowels, consonants, diphthongs, &c. Such at least would seem to be the only plausible explanation of the existence of this sheet in a strange hand among the autograph remains of the "Art of War," in which the author makes frequent use of the Greek alphabet



CHAPTER VIII.

The "Art of War."



E have already noted that it was during these years in Florence that Machiavelli wrote the seven books of the "Art of War." They were dedicated to Lorenzo di Filippo Strozzi, who had introduced the author to the Medici family, and are in the form of dialogues supposed to be held in the Oricellarii Gardens between Cosimo Rucellai, Fabrizio Colonna, Zanobi Buondelmonti, Battista della Palla, and Luigi Alamanni, during the year 1516, after Colonna's return to Florence at the close of the Lombard war. Nevertheless, it is clear that this work was written some years later, for in the opening pages the author speaks of the death of Cosimo Rucellai, which certainly did not occur before 1519.[1] The book was probably finished in 1520. In fact, on the 17th of November of that year, Filippo dei Nerli, in writing to Machiavelli, tells him that he has not yet received either the "Life of Castruccio," or the work "De re militari," and makes special complaint of not possessing the latter, because Cardinal dei Medici also wished to read it.[2] The "Art of War," at all events,

[1] Passerini, in his "Genealogia e Storia della famiglia Rucellai" (Florence, Cellini, 1861), states that Cosimo was born in 1495 and died *about* 1520. But in his "Curiosità storico-artistiche," both at pp. 69 and 71, he gives the year 1519 as the date of his death

[2] "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. lxxxvi It is true that the title "De re militari" might also apply to Vegezio's work of that name. But its being mentioned together with the "Vita di Castruccio," makes us believe it to have been Machiavelli's "Arte della Guerra"; nor is it likely that Cardinal dei Medici would have been obliged to apply to Machiavelli in order to obtain the work of Vegetius.

cordingly, we will turn to these before undertaking a closer examination of the work.

The art of war, as indeed everything else in Europe, was then undergoing a great and rapid transformation. During the Middle Ages, men-at-arms with horses ironclad, from head to foot, like themselves, had shown how easily they could overthrow foot soldiers by the thrust of their prodigious spears; infantry, therefore, had fallen into discredit, and heavy cavalry was the chief strength of every armed force. Accordingly, the mercenary bands by which Italy was overrun were principally composed of these mounted men-at-arms, and little attention was paid to the militia bands of the old Communes, formed of artisans, who fought on foot and had neither time nor money for training in the more complicated manœuvres of mounted troops. However, in the fifteenth century the foot soldiers of Switzerland marched down from their mountains in defence of their own liberty. And as these men, massed in numerous and compact battalions, with simple breastplates for their sole body-armour, and equipped with enormously long pikes, which they rested on the ground and pointed at the enemy, fought with the utmost valour against Austria and the Dukes of Burgundy, they proved that infantry could not only withstand, but even overcome the strongest cavalry. Thus they won, together with their own independence, the reputation of being the best soldiery in the world, and it was henceforth believed that no victory could be gained without the help of a good number of Swiss. The first to imitate them were the German Landsknechts, next the Spanish infantry, and both with great success. Thus, little by little, the chief strength of an army came to consist in the infantry; the Free Companies, whose extinction for many other reasons was only a question of time, began to lose power and prestige, and even the much lauded men-at-arms of the French were no longer deemed invincible against foot soldiers.

Machiavelli gained some knowledge on these points from his earliest experience of military matters at the camp before Pisa, and became more and more impressed by them during his subsequent travels in Switzerland and Tirol. Accordingly he gave prolonged study to the question. In fact, the fundamental idea of his "Art of War" is that the best militia can be formed by arming the people, that at all periods the infantry forms the backbone of an army, and therefore the greatest care should be given to its organization and discipline. It is possible, he says, that in countries where, as in certain tracts of Asia, there are immense plains with a nomad population, cavalry may play the

from its time, and it is impossible for civilians to fix the measure of intrinsic and technical worth that it undoubtedly possesses. Nor are these difficulties lessened by the fact of Machiavelli never having been a practical tactician. For this neither assists our judgment of the real value of his military theories, nor renders it easier to ascertain what were his blunders, nor which of these were derived from his inexperience, which from his times. In his day firearms had not as yet produced the revolution in army organization that afterwards led to an altered mode of warfare and to the creation of modern tactics. Indeed, the science of tactics was as yet unknown and unimagined. Machiavelli was the first to venture to attempt it, thereby showing an audacity equal to that which incited him to found a science of statecraft.

How far did he succeed in his attempt? This is the question to which we are bound to reply; and it is excessively difficult to do so, especially when quite unversed in military science. We shall therefore consult more competent judges, and profit by the counsels and suggestions of the military men to whose aid we have frequently had to recur in the course of this chapter.[1] However, Machiavelli's essay fortunately includes certain fundamental and general ideas of great politico-military value, which can be explained and appreciated without any technical equipment. Ac-

[1] Two writers in particular have favoured us with special advice first, Herr Max Jahns, a well-known writer on military topics, a Major on the Prussian Staff, author of the work entitled: "Geschichte des Kriegswesens von der Urzeit bis zur Renaissance," and who in 1876 published an essay on "Machiavelli und der Gedanke der allgemeinen Wehrpflicht" (*vide* "Kolnische Zeitung," August, 1877, Nos 108, 110, 112, and 115). By means of our friend, Professor Karl Hillebrand, we addressed a few questions to this gentleman. And the Major had the great kindness to furnish us with the fullest reply by forwarding a manuscript entitled. "Machiavelli als militarischer Techniker," since published in "Die Grenzboten fur Politik, Literatur und Kunst," No. xiii. (24th of March, 1881), Leipsic We take this opportunity of expressing our deepest gratitude to the kind and learned author.

We have also repeatedly applied to Major Valentino Chiala, an Italian Staff officer, and it is impossible to speak too highly of his unfailing kindness in replying to the numerous questions we have addressed to him during the last two years. We will only state that, but for his ready and valuable advice, we might frequently have gone astray in our examination of Machiavelli's "Arte della Guerra" But, fortunately for our country, it is a well-known fact that the officers of the Italian army unite to the manliest qualities the most exquisite kindness and courtesy.

Having no personal acquaintance with either of our two correspondents, we were ignorant at the time that both the German and the Italian officer entertained the greatest admiration and esteem for Machiavelli's "Art of War," even when judging it from a military and technical point of view. And as Major Chiala has never published the critical remarks with which he has favoured us, we have given quotations from them in the notes, headed: Major Chiala's remarks This, we trust, will give no offence to the modesty that accompanies his learning.

the military, are fused into one in his "Art of War;" and if the originality of the former is patent to all, so, too, the technical reforms he proposed for the improvement of the infantry of his day have repeatedly received the approbation and applause of modern tacticians.

We have already said that Machiavelli was not a practical soldier, and this is frankly admitted by him in the earliest pages of his work. This fact naturally enhances the merit of the truths he discovered, and is an added proof of the loftiness of his intellect; but it also betrays him into occasional errors And it is now time to turn our attention to one of these errors, inasmuch as its consequences partially influence the general character of the work. Machiavelli had very little faith in firearms. He had already said in the "Discourses" that although artillery might be effective against the walls of a fortress or against an army on the defensive in enclosed places, yet it was of little use in the field, or against an attacking force, and that war might be said to consist far more of attack than defence,[1] as the Romans had shown us by their example. Nor did he by any means alter this opinion in the "Art of War," where, although making very valuable remarks on the manner of employing artillery in the attack and defence of strongholds, he sometimes goes so far as to say that, in the open field, guns produce little besides smoke. And as to portable firearms, he makes so little account of them, that more than once we plainly perceive that he would be ready to abolish them altogether, but for his fear of showing too great hostility to what he considers the prejudices of his time. Nevertheless, it is requisite to clearly determine the nature and motives of Machiavelli's blunder, as it is called, in order not to magnify it to an unjust degree. Portable firearms were so imperfect in his day, so difficult to use with speed or profit, that they could not as yet satisfactorily supersede the bow and crossbow. In fact, not only were archers and crossbowmen still employed in all the battles of that century, but more than a hundred years later we find Montecuccoli suggesting that only two-thirds of the infantry should be armed with muskets and the remainder with pikes, which were not relinquished until the invention of bayonets in

Wehrpflicht zum Gegenstande wissenschaftlicher Erwagung wurde." And he afterwards adds that to Machiavelli's recognized claim to the title of creator of political science might well be added the same title with regard to military knowledge. "*Dies gilt auch von den militar-politischen Ideen Machiavelli's. Sie zeichnen ihn als einen die Zeitgenossen hoch uberragenden Geist, welcher die schweren Gebrechen des damaligen Kriegswesens erkannte und die Mittel angab sie zu heilen*" (*Vide* commencement of the letter published in the *Kolnische Zeitung*).

[1] "Discorsi," bk. ii. chap xvii.

chief part in war; but in Europe, mounted troops, though useful in skirmishes, reconnaisances, in supporting the infantry at need, and pursuing the beaten enemy, can never decide the fate of a battle. And this he asserts and repeats with so much decision and firmness, that leading military writers declare his expressions to be precisely those of a modern tactician[1]

Starting with this idea, Machiavelli's admiration for the Romans naturally led him to consult the pages of Titus Livy, and still more of Vegetius, on the organization, constitution and discipline of their infantry, and he was soon persuaded that the Roman legion was not only a model for imitation, but one not easily to be surpassed. Nor was he mistaken in this belief. For many centuries after his time the legion remained the study and admiration of all great army reformers. Putting aside for a moment the radical changes introduced by firearms into modern tactics, the Roman legion is even now a model that has never been excelled, and from which much may still be learnt.

Combining with his Roman studies his personal experience of Swiss infantry, the results of repeated observation of German infantry during his travels, and all that he had recently heard of the Spanish, Machiavelli began to plan a model infantry corps, and thus hit upon the idea of his Militia Ordinance which he was continually striving to perfect in theory. And this conception of a novel infantry system was joined to another of greater importance, from which, indeed, it was derived, and which had also been suggested to him by Roman and Swiss examples; namely, the conception forming the chief aim of his book, and one of the most constant of his whole life: that the armed nation is the only national and invincible army, the true military strength of the modern State. It is not without reason that some writers have styled this idea prophetic, for although actually a discovery of the Romans, it has only attained triumph in our own days in the Prussian military system now more or less imitated throughout Europe.[2] Thus Machiavelli's conceptions, the political as well as

[1] Major Jahns writes thus: "Wenn man diese Satze liest, so glaubt man einen Theoretiker aus unsern eignen Tagen zu horen" Jahns, "Machiavelli als militarischer Techniker," in the above quoted number of "Die Grenzboten," p. 555. The author alludes to Machiavelli's remarks upon cavalry in the "Discorsi" (bk. ii. chap. xviii.; "Opere," vol. iii. p 244), and in the "Arte della Guerra" (bk ii.; "Opere," vol. iv. p. 239).

[2] In the previously quoted letter, "Machiavelli und der Gedanke der allgemeinen Wehrpflicht," Major Jahns starts by begging his readers to put aside the virtuous indignation usually aroused by the name of Machiavelli, since "nicht von der sittlichen Haltung des Mannes will ich reden, sondern ich will ihn bezeichnen als den ersten modernen Menschen, dem der Gedanke der allgemeinen

velli understood soldiers and their weapons as they had been before 1512; and it was these that he tried to bring to perfection by examining the conditions under which he knew them and by studying the art of war as practised by the Romans. Had he been actually a military man, he would certainly have had better opportunities of gaining accurate knowledge of the great battles taking place in his time, and perhaps had a clearer presentiment of the future reserved for firearms. Spear and pike, sword and bow, are weapons too simple to be susceptible of much improvement, and accordingly are little different in modern times from what they were in ancient; but firearms, being infinitely more complicated, were naturally capable of enormous improvements, of which the importance might have been foreseen, but of which it was impossible to calculate the extent. Certainly Machiavelli had no opportunities for calculations of this kind, and therefore in determining the value of his military theories, we have to remember the conditions in which they were elaborated and expounded.

At any rate, he was the first to try to formulate a logical and scientific theory of the tactics used in the wars of his day, and of possible improvements in them. His suggestions are based upon what may be called the fundamental and normal branches of the military art, and on this account possess an undeniable value, truly marvellous on the part of a man who was never a soldier.[1] But for the great progress of firearms and the radical changes and modifications thus brought about, even the portions of Machiavelli's book now only interesting from the historical point of view would be equally remarkable for their practical value. For he unhesitatingly indicated the only possible road to progress, without the intervention of an element so subversive of the old tactics. Yet, as it stands, this book serves to prove, according to the verdict of the best experts, that the founder of the science of politics is also "the first of modern classics on military subjects."[2]

[1] Upon this point Major Chiala writes: "After reading the seven books of the 'Arte della Guerra,' it is impossible to deny that on everything relating to the unchangeable portion of the art, Machiavelli writes with so much lucidity and soundness of sense, that even those but slightly acquainted with the conditions of the art of war in those days, are obliged, not only to recognize his superiority of intellect, but also a by no means superficial experience of military matters Certainly no simply theoretical writer has ever written in this fashion." And at another passage. "The book of the 'Arte della Guerra' seems to me to be a real marvel, not only for its time, but in the fullest sense of the word."

[2] Such is the opinion repeatedly expressed by Major Jahns, who terminates his essay, "Machiavelli als militarischer Techniker," by a verdict not very unlike that already quoted by us, from the beginning of his letter on Machiavelli "Alles in Allem genommen, erkennt man, dass Machiavelli, der durch seine begeisterte

the eighteenth century.[1] The difficulty of introducing entirely novel modes of warfare has been experienced in our own days with regard to the needle gun.

This weapon was adopted by the Prussians as early as 1840, and its efficacy firmly established during the war with Denmark in 1864; nevertheless Austria only made preparatory trials of it, and had not yet adopted it in the war of 1866. The colossal disaster of Sadowa was required to secure its introduction into the armies of Europe. How great, therefore, must have been the obstacles encountered by the first portable firearms, which, with all their primary imperfections, seemed only fitted to upset the best traditions of warfare, the whole military tactics of the most renowned hosts!

But as regards artillery it is a very different question, and these remarks cannot entirely exonerate Machiavelli on that score. At the battle of Ravenna (1512), the then celebrated field pieces of Alfonso d'Este made vast havoc among the enemy; at Novara (1513), the Swiss lost a great number of men, who, to use Giovio's expression, had been *torn by the artillery*; at Marignano (1515), the French guns helped to decide the fate of the day, and made enormous gaps in the serried ranks of the Swiss. Indeed, from that moment the latter's infantry began to lose their prestige of invincibility.[2] Now Machiavelli's "Art of War" was written after the battle of Marignano, where likewise the musketeers had their first opportunity of proving the efficacy of their weapons, an efficacy that was still better demonstrated at Pavia in 1525.

The real cause of Machiavelli's disregard for firearms must also be sought in the narrowness of his military experience at the camp before Pisa and in organizing the Florentine militia. It is true that he had enjoyed a near view of the Swiss and German infantry; but only at hurried moments and several years earlier than 1512. At the time of the battle of Ravenna, he was entirely absorbed in preparing for the defence of Prato and Florence; the battles of Novara and Marignano occurred later, when he was removed from his sphere of activity and living in his country retirement, where only a distant echo of these events reached him through political and literary friends. Consequently, Machia-

[1] Major Chiala insists strongly upon this point in his "Remarks."

[2] Major Jahns remarks *à propos* of Machiavelli's contempt for artillery: "Diese Nichtachtung war nach dem Erfolge von Ravenna ein Anachronismus." "Machiavelli als militarischer Techniker" in "Die Grenzboten," the number before quoted, p. 556 Major Chiala holds that at the battle of Ravenna the artillery had not yet shown its full efficacy, and is more indulgent, therefore, towards Machiavelli. But he adds that after the battle of Marignano, Machiavelli's blunder became far less excusable.

captain, just returned from the Lombard war, is invited by Cosimo to join the circle in the Oricellarii Gardens, and as soon as he appears, begins to discourse of military matters The first of the seven books into which the work is divided is chiefly devoted to discussion on the kind of men of which an army should be composed. Inflamed by the deepest admiration for the Roman soldiery, Colonna, who is in fact the mouthpiece of Machiavelli and the expounder of his doctrines, remarks that all are now desirous of imitating the ancients in superficial matters, whereas it would be better to try to imitate them in substantial things, namely, in habits of life and soul. We should do as they did, he said, "by honouring and rewarding virtue, and having no contempt for poverty ; by esteeming the rules and regulations of military discipline ; by compelling the citizens to love one another, to live without splitting into factions, to have less respect for private than for public interests. . . . The which regulations are not hard to enforce, if duly studied and entered upon in a fitting way, since their truth is so apparent that every ordinary mind may perceive it."[1]

But the like qualities are never to be found in those who make a trade of war, after the fashion of mercenary troops These must of necessity be bloodthirsty, rapacious, and dishonest, must always desire war or commit deeds of theft and violence for their subsistence in times of peace "Can you not all remember the extortion, pillage, and rapine, perpetrated by the Free Companies without there being any possible remedy? In the days of our forefathers, Francesco Sforza, not only deceived the Milanese in whose service he fought, but deprived them of their liberty and made himself lord over them. His father, Attendolo Sforza, compelled the Queen Giovanna, whose pay he took, to throw herself into the arms of the King of Aragon in consequence of his sudden desertion. Braccio di Montone, by means of the same artifices, would have gained possession of the Neapolitan kingdom, but for meeting his death at Aquila. And all this because these men traded in war, and could live by war alone. So long as the Roman Republic preserved its purity, its captains were satisfied with winning victories for their country and then retiring into private life. At the end of the Carthaginian war the times changed ; men arose who made fighting their trade, and Rome soon experienced the same dangers into which we have fallen, as in the case of Cæsar and Pompey. For this reason no well-organized State ever permitted its citizens to practise war as a trade. Nor can any existing kingdom be cited as a proof to the

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 196, 197.

In the dedication to Lorenzo Strozzi, one of his friends and protectors, Machiavelli immediately enters on a very clear exposition of the leading political idea and principal object of his book. "It has been a fatal error in Italy," he says, "to have separated civil from military life, converting the latter into a trade as it is carried on by the Free Companies. In this way the soldier becomes violent, threatening, corrupt, the enemy of all quiet life. It behoves us therefore to revert to the old systems of the Romans, who recognized no difference between the citizen and the soldier, and maintained that, of the two, the latter should show himself the more faithful, pacific, and God-fearing. For truly, from whom need we demand more faith, more honesty and virtue, than from him who should always be ready to die for his country? More than others he suffers by war, and being in continual danger, has more need than others of the help of God. Desiring therefore to essay to revive among us the virtue of the ancients, the which I cannot deem impossible, and in order not to spend my leisure in idleness, I have determined to transcribe all my knowledge of the art of war. I know well that it is somewhat bold to treat of a matter that has never been my business; nevertheless, writers cannot do so much serious mischief by their words as clumsy captains may frequently effect by their deeds."[1]

The work then begins with an eulogium on Cosimo Rucellai, recently deceased at a very early age, and towards whom Machiavelli shows sincere gratitude and a very warm and earnest affection. With a degree of emotion rarely exhibited by him, he says that he cannot mention without tears the name of the deceased, who had all the qualities friends could possibly desire in a good friend, or the country desire in a citizen. "I know not what thing was so exclusively his own (without even excepting his soul) that he would not willingly have bestowed it upon his friends; I know not any enterprise from which he would have shrunk had it eemed to him to be for the interest of his country." And after this the dialogue opens at once. Fabrizio Colonna, the renowned

Verkundigung des Gedankens der allgemeinen Wehrpflicht als ein wahrhaft prophetischen Geist und als einer der wichtigsten Denker auf dem Gebiete des Militarischen Verfassungslebens erscheint, auch das Wesen der kriegerischen Technik in einer für seine Zeit gang ungewohnlichen Deutlichkeit durchschaute, und es ist ein neuer, ich mochte sagen psychologischer Beweis fur die nahe Verwandschaft von Kriegskunst und Staatskunst, dass *der Begrunder des modernen Staatsrecht zugleich der erste moderne militarische Klassiker ist.*" Before this essay was published, Major Chiala repeatedly expressed the same idea, and added these words: "Come nella parte politica ed organica delle milizie, le vedute del Machiavelli furono ispirate ai veri principii dell' arte della guerra, così anche nel campo tecnico per lui più difficile."

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. p. 187.

and, as did the ancients, training them by discipline, which is worth more than nature.[1]

From Vegetius, too, is borrowed the following description of the physical and moral qualities desired in a soldier: "the eyes quick and lively, the neck sinewy, the chest broad, the arms muscular, the fingers long, the stomach small, the hips round, the legs and feet lean, the which things always give a man strength and agility, the two things which are chiefly indispensable in a soldier. Great attention must also be paid to his habits, and to seeing that he hath honesty and decency, otherwise he is but an instrument of scandal and an element of corruption; for let no one believe that with dishonest habits and an unclean mind there can abide any quality in the least worthy of praise."[2]

"You, then," Cosimo Rucellai now objects to Colonna, "positively wish to re-establish the Florentine militia, that so many wise men have pronounced to be useless, and that succeeded so badly upon trial. These wise men cite the Romans who, although armed in the way you recommend, nevertheless forfeited their liberty; they cite the Venetians, who would never sanction this militia, and the King of France, who disarmed his subjects the better to keep them in subjection. In short, they condemn the Militia Ordinance rather for its inutility than its danger."

To these remarks Fabrizio Colonna replies, that similar opinions can only be maintained by persons devoid of accurate knowledge, or genuine experience of military affairs. "In fact," he says, "we are taught by history and experience, that all States must be based upon national arms, and that by these only can they be securely defended; nor is it possible to have national armies excepting by means of the Militia Ordinance. If this did not succeed on its first trial in Florence, we must improve, not condemn it, and must also remember that the world has no armies which have been uniformly successful. No wise ruler of States ever doubted but that a country should be defended by its own inhabitants. Had the Venetians comprehended all this they would have established a new empire of the world. In fact, by sea they fought with their own men, and were always victorious; on land they employed mercenary captains and hireling soldiers; and then had not a leg left them to stand upon. The Romans,

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 209, 210.

[2] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 218 The text of Vegetius runs as follows: "Sit ergo adolescens, Martio operi deputandus, vigilantibus oculis, erecta cervice, lato pectore, humeris muscolosis, valentibus brachiis, digitis longioribus, ventre modicus, exilior cruribus, suris et pedibus non superflua carne distentis, sed nervorum duritia collectis" (F. Vegetii, *op. cit.*, lib. i chap. vi. p 9). Even the words of Machiavelli, referring to the moral qualities of the soldier in the quotation given above,

contrary, since none observes any good rule. All well-organized States grant their princes absolute power over their armies solely when in camp and during war, since only at such times are sudden decisions imperative, and, consequently, the rule of one man. In other matters the prince should execute nothing without advice; and he should be carefully prevented from having about his person in times of peace any of those that always desire war, and neither can nor will subsist without it.[1] But even leaving well-regulated States out of the question, it cannot be well for living sovereigns to maintain professional soldiers, especially now that the chief strength of armies consists in the infantry. If things be not ordered in such wise that soldiers may be willing to go home in times of peace and work at some trade for their bread, it necessarily follows that the State must come to ruin in one way or another. You are forced either to be always at war, always keep your soldiery on full pay, or live in constant danger of their depriving you of your kingdom. Perpetual war is impossible, neither can you keep up a permanent army, so either way you must go to destruction."[2] In Machiavelli's time the greatest source of danger of this kind lay in the infantry. Men-at-arms were frequently nobles, and therefore, especially in France and Germany, able to live at their own expense. Infantry, on the contrary, was composed of the lower class of townsfolk and peasantry, who unless they returned to peaceable employments depended upon war or permanent pay.

The next point discussed is that of how to make the best choice of men, the *deletto*, as Machiavelli puts it, or as we should now say, the military conscription. And hereupon Colonna, alluding to the treatise of Vegetius, and partly paraphrasing, partly translating it, goes on to say: "that it is best to choose natives of temperate climes, since these are men both of courage and prudence, whereas hot climates generate prudent but timid men, and cold countries give birth to daring but imprudent men."[3] But this rule could hold good only for one who should be master of the world and with entire freedom of choice. To form rules available for all, some mode must be found of selecting the best men of every province,

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 202–204. [2] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 204.

[3] Ibid., vol. iv. p. 209 "Omnes nationes quæ vicinæ sunt soli, nimio calore siccatas, amplius quidem sapere, sed minus habere sanguinis dicunt; ac propterea constantiam ac fiduciam cominus non habere pugnandi, quia metuunt vulnera, qui se exiguum sanguinem habere noverunt. Contra, septentrionales populi remoti a solis ardoribus, inconsultiores quidem, sed tamen, largo sanguine redundantes sunt ad bella promtissimi," &c. (Flavii Vegetii Renati Comitis, "De re militari libri quinque." Ex recensione Nicolai Schwebellii-Argentorati, ex typographia Societatis Bipontinæ, 1806. Bk. i. chap. ii. pp. 5, 6).

citizens, princes, and generals should sacrifice everything
State, to the welfare of the country; and therein cons
moral value of their actions. Let us take, for instance, the
able soldier who sets forth on a campaign with coolness and
devoid of all personal hatred or rancour. Do we think
loyal than other men, less generous, less devoted to hi
because he has to deceive the enemy in order to defe
to give rewards to deserters, who are traitors to their count
to employ spies, who, in their turn, fulfil a necessary and ha
duty?

Hence, according to Machiavelli, we have no right to de
moral grandeur to the politician who, in obeying the ine
natural, and fatal laws of the art of government, obey
solely for his country's good, and strives for personal wea
power merely because he is the personification of the State
sacrifice of personal to public interest is the universal
political, as of military conduct. And this rule can only
served by him who is genuinely good and honest, altho
may seem a villain in the eyes of the crowd. Therefo
useless to hope that our country can be powerful or our
strong unless there be real virtue in us.

The second book now proceeds to speak of the met
equipping and training the men. "It was the custom
Romans to cover the foot soldier with iron; he carried a s
sword, and the short, heavy pike called the *pilum*; the Gre
the contrary, and especially the Macedonians, gave him less
sive armour, but a more effective weapon in the spear, cal
sarissa, of more than fifteen feet in length."[1] It is stran
Machiavelli, notwithstanding a thousand proofs to the co
should have refused to believe that the Greeks used
because he did not understand why these could be requi
men armed with the *sarissa*.[2] He gives an admirable de
of the real defects of the Greek phalanx, and of its gr
feriority to the Roman legion, but is often very inexact
details. Not only does he rely upon different authors w
distinguishing the periods to which they refer, but whe
necessary to support any one of his theories, always seeks
firm it by the testimony of the ancients At this point his
is to prove a resemblance between the weapons of the Gree
those of the Swiss, the better to point out their defects, an
sequently the superiority of his own militia when equipped
Roman fashion.

[1] "Opere," vol. iv.; "Arte della Guerra," lib ii p 231.
[2] Ibid, vol. iv.; "Arte della Guerra," lib. ii. p 231.

on the other hand, were far wiser, and being at first only practised in fighting on land, when they were opposed at sea by the Carthaginians, speedily trained their people to naval conflicts, and became equally successful. Then as to the example of France, who does not keep her subjects trained to war, and is therefore obliged to have recourse to professional soldiers, there is no man, unless he be blinded by prejudice, who cannot see that this is the true cause of that kingdom's weakness."[1] To sum up, Fabrizio Colonna maintained that all able-bodied men, between the ages of seventeen and forty, should be drilled on certain stated days, so as to be always in readiness to defend the country.

From this first book of the "Art of War" it is clearly seen, that in the monarchy of Machiavelli—the monarchy approved and recommended by him wherever a republic should be impracticable—the sovereign is surrounded by wise men who assist him with their advice and never allow him absolute rule in times of peace. In war alone, the prince must be at the head of his army and hold absolute command. And whether republic or monarchy, the strength of the State must reside in the armed people that, being trained to discipline, law, and duty, can be trusted to defend the country. Such is the army in which Machiavelli has full confidence, and he desires it to be composed of men who are not merely robust and well-trained soldiers, but above all are virtuous, modest, and disposed to any sacrifice for the public good.[2] In the "Art of War" he repeatedly insists that virtuous citizens constitute the real strength of armies, and hence the only solid basis of the State. And this implies nothing contradictory to the views expressed in the "Discourses" and in the "Prince." Even a general should, he thinks, be guided by very different rules of conduct from those imposed in private life. Nevertheless, in public life,

are copied from the same author. He does not usually quote Vegetius, but in this passage uses the phrase, "as it is said by those who write on war," nearly always in reference to Vegetius. And at p. 10 of the Roman treatise we find these words: "Juventus enim, cui defensio provinciarum, cui bellorum committenda fortuna est, et genere, si copia suppetat, et moribus debet excellere Honestas enim idoneum militem reddit. Verecundia dum prohibet fugere, facit esse victorem. Quid enim prodest si exerceatur ignavus? si pluribus stipendiis mereat in castris? Nunquam exercitus profecit, tempore cuius in probandis tironibus claudicant electio." Here we have the same idea and often even the identical words employed by Machiavelli.

[1] "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 212–216.

[2] As we have before noted, Machiavelli's political military schemes are always fused together into a single complete plan, the second scheme being but the logical sequence of the first. A popular, national army, necessarily implies a preponderance of foot soldiers. And history teaches that military changes are the result of social and political transformations. *Vide* on this subject: L. Blanch, "Della scienza militare, considerata ne' suoi rapporti colle altre scienze e col sistema sociale. Discorsi nove." Naples, Porcelli, 1834.

enemy's country, harassing its troops, keeping it always on the alert, and cutting off its provisions, it is the infantry that decides the fate of pitched battles. Neglect of this consideration has brought about the ruin of Italy in our own day, and we have beheld our country plundered, devastated, and overrun by foreigners, solely through the mistake of paying too little attention to foot soldiers, and turning all our soldiers into horsemen."[1]

The next subject treated is that of the exercises required for the soldier's training; and on this head Machiavelli contents himself with borrowing from Vegetius, describing and recommending every usage of the Romans,[2] and winding up by saying that as such exercises were possible among the ancients, "so, too, should they be possible among ourselves, the more especially as we might find examples in many German cities, in which these customs are preserved, and where every inhabitant makes his choice of arms, is inscribed accordingly and sent to drill on his leisure days. But it is not enough to exercise and train the soldiers separately; they must be also exercised and disciplined in masses. Every army should therefore have, as it were, a principal branch, for the collective drilling and training of its men. The Romans had their legion, the Greeks their phalanx, while the Swiss have their battalions, and we ought to follow their example."[3] Thus, for the reasons given by him, Machiavelli equips his battalion partly in Grecian, partly in Roman fashion, and composes it of six thousand men, divided into ten companies, just as the Roman legion, composed, he tells us, of from five to six thousand men, was divided into ten cohorts[4] "Every company consists of 450 infantry, of whom 400 are heavily armed, or else of 100 equipped with pikes, and 300 with sword and shield. The remaining fifty men, answering to the *velites*, are lightly equipped with firelocks, cross-bows, or similar weapons The pikemen occupy the five foremost ranks, twenty in each; the bearers of swords and shields the other fifteen. But, in order that the battalion may be protected on all sides from the enemy's horse, it is strengthened by 1500 extra foot soldiers, of whom 1000 are armed with pikes, and disposed on the

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib. ii pp 230–239. The remarks concerning cavalry at p 239 are among those that, in the opinion of Major Jahns, might well have been written by a modern tactician.

[2] On comparing Vegetius, lib i chap ix pp. 12–14, 19, with Machiavelli's "Arte della Guerra," lib ii pp 243–245, it will be seen that the latter imitates and often simply translates the former writer.

[3] "Arte della Guerra," p 246

[4] Machiavelli here alludes to the legion described by Vegetius (lib. ii chap vi), not to that of Servius Tullius, which was of three thousand foot, was easier to handle and better disciplined.

"The Swiss," he goes on to say, "have armed their battalions in imitation of the Greek phalanx, concentrating their strength in their pikes, and giving very little armour to the men. And, following their example, foot soldiers nowadays have an iron breast-piece, a pike over ten feet in length, and a sword that is also very long. Very few wear armour on the back and arms, none on the head, and these few carry a halberd six feet long with a head like an axe. Besides these halberdiers there is a small band armed with firelocks, who do the work of crossbowmen. This method was introduced by the Swiss after they had proved, at the pikes' point, that infantry were capable of vanquishing mounted men, and having thereby risen to very high repute were afterwards imitated by the Germans. But the cavalry once checked and routed, pikes are of no use in the *mêlée*, and the pikemen with their scanty armour are exposed to the blows of the enemy. For this reason the Swiss, though always effective against cavalry, are very weak in resisting infantry that is equipped for fighting at close quarters. The Romans cased their men in armour, and provided them with shields for their defence, and swords for hand-to-hand combat. The Spanish are sufficiently well-armed to be able to overcome the Germans at close quarters; but they cannot resist the attack of modern cavalry, which is more powerful than the old, in consequence of its wearing stouter armour, and having also peaked saddles and stirrups such as were unknown in earlier times. When Carmagnola, with six thousand horse and a small body of infantry, had to encounter eighteen thousand Swiss, he was repulsed by the latter's pikes. But being a skilful captain, he made his men-at-arms protected with armour dismount, and in this way defeated the enemy. When the Spanish came to the relief of their Captain Gonsalvo, who was besieged in Barletta, they were met by the French with their men-at-arms and four thousand Germans. The latter, armed with long pikes, quickly broke the ranks of the Spanish infantry, who then, by the aid of small bucklers and their own agility, threw themselves upon their foes so as to have them at sword's length, and made an end of them. The same thing would have occurred at Ravenna, when the Spanish dashed into the midst of the Germans, and could have destroyed them, but for the charge of the enemy's cavalry, with which they were unable to cope in the same manner. It is therefore necessary to have infantry armed in the Roman fashion, able to resist foot soldiers like the Spanish, but also fitted to repulse cavalry like the Swiss. And, as with the Romans, this infantry should constitute the main strength of the army, because, although cavalry is useful for clearing the way, laying waste the

emergency or peril, the author of the "Art of War" proved that he knew the best mode of improving the tactics of his time.

On careful examination of Machiavelli's system of forming his battalion, he will be found to contradict himself upon one point. He places his sole reliance on the infantry and wishes it to be equipped in the Roman fashion, so as to be very easily handled, and readier for attack than defence, and he never seems to wish to count much on the cavalry. Yet, not only does he burden his militia bands with armour, but hedges them in with pikemen on every side, for their better defence against those cavalry charges which cause him such continual anxiety. He even reproaches the Spanish infantry for their negligence on this score, since they were often thrown into disorder by cavalry attacks, although able to recover themselves at close quarters. And this was because, while clearly discerning the future power of infantry, he could not in practice altogether refuse to recognize the important part still played by cavalry in the wars of the period, and therefore often felt obliged to recur to the question of the best means of opposing the onslaught of men-at-arms.[1] The same idea also prevailed in the formation of the Swiss battalions that Machiavelli so heartily admired, and he urged it all the more strongly because of the slight value attributed by him to firearms. But leaving aside this theoretical contradiction, it is certain that the battalion of Machiavelli is a positive improvement on that of the Swiss, on account of its greater flexibility, ease of movement, and adaptability.[2] So good was it, in fact, that but for the progress of firearms, the logical and natural development of the art of war would have inevitably led it into the road indicated by him, and to the adoption of his proposed reforms which are therefore of very considerable value.[3] The perfecting of muskets and guns afterwards led to the

[1] "Machiavelli nimmt also die Legionartaktik der Romer zum Vorbilde. Aber trotzdem bleibt auch seine Schlachtordnung mehr auf die Defensive als auf den Angriff angerichtet; denn selbst dieser grosse Geist vermag sich nicht ganz frei zu machen von dem Banne der mittelalterlichen Tradition, welche dem Fussvolke unbedingt die inferiore Stellung gegenuber der Reiterei zuwies. Er vermag das romische Vorbild nicht zu erreichen" (Jahns, "Machiavelli als militarischer Techniker," p 554). Major Chiala frequently notices the same contradiction.

[2] "Let us compare," says Major Chiala, "the formation proposed by Machiavelli with that adopted by the Swiss, and we can easily see that for lightness and divisibility (*frazionabilità*) the former immensely surpasses the latter. The Swiss method of formation must have been very primitive, although it was the approved method of the period, that of moving in great squares of about 10,000 men each! How much lighter, handier, and more divisible is the formation recommended by Machiavelli!"

[3] "We may say that but for the intervention of the new element of firearms, the art of war would have developed in the direction of the model proposed by Machiavelli. It is certain that from the Swiss phalanx we should gradually have come

flanks of the battalion, and 500 *velites* who, together with the others, form the wings. Once or twice yearly the whole battalion must be called under arms, and manœuvred as in time of war. To have a courageous army it is less necessary for it to consist of brave men than to be well disciplined, since if, for instance, I am among the foremost combatants, and know upon whom I have to fall back in case of repulse, and who will take my place afterwards, I shall always fight daringly, conscious that succour is at hand."[1] Just as in the "Discourses" Machiavelli attributes extraordinary efficacy to good political codes, crediting them with an inherent power to bestow liberty and generate virtue, so in the "Art of War" he attributed extraordinary efficacy to good military discipline, and believes it all-sufficient both to create soldiers and endow them with courage.

He now proceeds to marshal his company, enumerating the various forms it may take, the various manœuvres it must execute, and describing all its evolutions with considerable minuteness. "More than all else is it necessary to have soldiers who will quickly conform to discipline; and it is requisite to keep them together in these companies, to drill them in their ranks, and make them step quickly, both forwards and backwards, and go over difficult ground without breaking line; for men who can do this well are practised soldiers, and even although they have never set eyes on the enemy, may be said to be veteran soldiers. . . . This is as concerns getting them together when they are in small file, and on the march. But if after being drawn up in mass, their ranks should be broken by some accident, whether from the nature of the ground or by attack of the enemy, then it is a most important and difficult task to make them recover themselves quickly, and a matter demanding great practice and experience, even as it was much studied by the ancients."[2]

Machiavelli had great reason to insist so strongly upon this point. Armies were then ordered in such fashion, that if, during battle, the enemy succeeded in attacking them on the flank, all was lost, on account of the great difficulty of changing front. Thus, when the foremost ranks had to fall back, there was general confusion, and nothing more could be done.[3] By continually urging the necessity of making the army easy to handle and capable of instantaneous change of front, in every fresh

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib. ii. pp 250, 251.
[2] Ibid., lib. ii. p 257.
[3] All historians of the art of war agree upon this point, and Louis Napoleon Bonaparte makes the same remark in his work: "Du présent, du passé et de l'avenir de l'artillerie," vol. i. p. 83.

is derived from the example of those nations, who, being jealously attached to their governments, and dreading slavery as it is not dreaded elsewhere, all cherish their honour and independence." [1]

At the close of the second book, Cosimo reminds Fabrizio that he has not yet touched on the question of cavalry. And the latter replies that he has not mentioned it, because it is of slighter importance than infantry, and also in a far better condition. "If not stronger than that of the ancients it is certainly as strong." Therefore he would make little or no alteration in it. He would introduce a few matchlock-men among the light horse, but rather to scare the country-folk than to produce any real effect. He would wish every battalion to include 150 men-at-arms and 150 light horse; he would wish to see a great diminution in Italy of the excessive number of horses and waggons employed in transporting the arms and baggage of the cavalry. But he has no other suggestion to add. The studies of Machiavelli, his principal experience, and consequently the proposals he wished to make, chiefly regarded the infantry.

In the third book we find the army arrayed in order of battle, to meet the enemy in the field. The greatest blunder that can be perpetrated, according to Machiavelli, is that of presenting a single front to the enemy, as was the practice in his time, a single line of battle, compelling the entire army to risk everything at the same moment. And this came about because of their incapacity to imitate the Romans, who divided their legion into the *Acies*, or vanguard, *Principes*, or centre, and *Triarii*, or rearguard. The first stood of course to the front, and in serried ranks; the centre were formed in looser ranks, so as to be able to include the first, should these suffer repulse; the ranks of the rearguard were still thinner, so as to leave space to receive both *Acies* and *Principes*. The Greeks, being armed with long spears, did not renew their formation in this way; but instead, every fallen soldier was replaced by the one behind him, and thus all the ranks closed up, excepting the hindermost, which was gradually thinned. The Romans also began by following this plan, but then it ceased to please them and they divided their legions into cohorts and *manipuli*, deeming that the body with most life was that containing most souls and composed of the greatest number of parts, each of which could exist by itself. [2] The Swiss, he goes on to say,

[1] "Arte della Guerra," p 274.

[2] Ibid, lib. iii. p 280 There is some confusion and inaccuracy here. The author does not discriminate between the legion as it was formed in the times of Servius Tullus, and what it afterwards became when divided into cohorts The former, divided into *manipuli*, was composed of 3000 foot soldiers, that is, of 1200 *Acies*, 1200 *Principes* and 600 *Triarii*. It is not true that the

disuse of compact battalions, and showed the need of facing the enemy with thinner and more extended ranks. This, however, was only effected at a much later period.

At this point the speakers moot a question similar to that already started by Machiavelli in the "Discourses." He had inquired: how it was that the ancients possessed greater political liberty and virtue than the moderns? And the reply had been: because they had republican institutions, and because Pagan creeds encouraged force, patriotism, and even ferocity, whereas Christianity thinks rather of Heaven than earth, and accords to meekness a higher place than to force. Only among the Swiss and the Germans are any instances of ancient virtue still to be found. And in the "Art of War" Cosimo Rucellai asks in the same way: how is it that whereas Europe had so many great captains in old times, and Asia and Africa so few, there should be few anywhere at the present day? "The ancients," replies Fabrizio Colonna, "had in Europe many kingdoms or republics which, in making war upon one another, cultivated military virtues; the nations of the East, on the contrary, had only one or two great empires. Africa was in a more fortunate condition in this respect, thanks to the Carthaginian Republic. A greater number of excellent men are generated in republics than in monarchies, since in the former, virtue is generally held in honour, whereas in monarchies it is feared; whence it comes that virtuous men flourish in the one, while they are extinguished in the other.[1] And when the Roman Empire having waxed mighty in Europe and become master of the world, enemies were no longer dreaded, then military virtue disappeared from the same causes which had destroyed it among the nations of the East. It is true that the barbarians again divided the empire; but a virtue that has once died away is not easily revived. Besides which, the Christian religion does not prescribe the same duty of resistance imposed by the ancient creeds, and therefore beneath its sway affairs are not carried on with the old ferocity.[2] There are now great kingdoms having no fear of their neighbours, and small cities depending upon potentates for their defence; and thus there is less occasion for the conflicts serving to promote military virtue. Behold Germany, where, because there are many principalities and republics, there is much military virtue, and you will perceive that whatever good there may be in the present military scheme,

to configurations of a lighter, more elastic, better articulated kind; in short, to formations approaching nearer and nearer to the type of the legion, the exact *quid simile* of that proposed by Machiavelli" ("Remarks," by Major Chiala).

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib. ii. p. 271.

[2] Ibid., lib. ii p. 273.

vigorously repulse the attack; but when hand-to-hand fighting begins, they can do nothing and therefore fall back to make room for the infantry armed with swords and shields, who then rout the enemy.

After Fabrizio Colonna's description of this battle, which is given with much fervour and minuteness, Luigi Alamanni inquires: "Why have you allowed your batteries to be silent after a single volley? why have you planted those of the enemy in such fashion that their shots pass over the heads of your men? I have always heard the weapons and battle order of the ancients mentioned with contempt, for it was said that they would now be powerless against artillery which can tear through the ranks and penetrate breastplates." "It is," replies Fabrizio, "because I allowed only one discharge, and was even doubtful as to allowing that, since it is more important for me to avoid receiving injury from the guns of the enemy than to inflict injury upon him with mine[1] Hence it is necessary to march rapidly on his batteries and in loose ranks, so that he may have no time to fire, or that in any case his missiles may only strike scattered men. And as I have said, I hesitated whether to fire a single discharge, because I know that the smoke of the guns screens the enemy from your view. And I have supposed his balls to pass over the heads of my men because that in fact is what nearly always occurs. For truly cannon are so difficult of management, that if you aim ever so little too high their shots pass over the enemy's head, and if you lower them in the least they fire into the ground. And they are altogether useless in a general engagement

"I am well aware that many hold the ancient order of battle to be quite ineffectual against artillery, just as though any new order of battle had been discovered that could stand fire with success. If you are acquainted with any such order, I should be glad to learn it, for up to this moment I have never seen any, nor believe that any be possible. I should wish you to inform me why the foot soldiers of the present day still wear iron breastplates and corselets, and why mounted troops are always cased in armour? The Swiss, like the ancients, formed in close battalions of six to eight thousand men, and all have followed their example There is nothing so dangerous as to face artillery in close order, yet that is the prevailing practice of our time. And if it affords no protection against artillery—against which, indeed, there can be no real defence—it is always effectual against infantry, cavalry, pikes, swords, cross-bows, &c. Besides, if it is still possible to sit down before a city, and within range of batteries which may inflict

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib III p 294.

form their great battalions on the plan of the Greek phalanx, and divide their army into three battalions placed in the following order: the second to the right and in the rear of the first, the third still further in the rear to the left. The first, when retreating cannot fall back among the second and third; but these advance instead to reinforce it when necessary. And therefore, just as the compactness of the phalanx had to give way to the mobility and flexibility of the Roman legion, so the unwieldy Swiss battalions must give way to our militia bands, the which can turn about and fight in all directions, can thrice form a new front when obliged to fall back, can assume any shape, receive cavalry charges with the pike, and repulse infantry with the sword.[1]

Machiavelli composes his regular army of four battalions, each divided into ten companies, like the ten cohorts of the legion described by Vegetius. The total force would amount to 24,000 foot and 1200 horse, but to simplify matters he only takes two battalions into consideration: that is, 12,000 foot and 600 horse, since the same remarks would hold good for double that number of men. He therefore places ten companies in the front, six immediately behind, and four to the rear, so that the foremost rank may fall back into the second and both into the third. Each battalion has its pikemen in the front ranks and its shield-bearers in the others. On either flank of the army are planted the bands called pikemen extraordinary, in order to withstand the enemy's cavalry on all sides. Machiavelli stations his cavalry in the wings, the artillery to the front. During the *mêlée*, these companies re-form in that which he calls the Roman order: that is, the front ranks fall back into the second, and both into the third. In each, however, the men follow the method that he has said to be peculiar to the Greek phalanx, the hinder man advancing to take the place of the fallen comrade in front.

The opposing armies are now supposed to be face to face, and Fabrizio Colonna explains the movements of that under his own command. The guns are discharged without much effect save the production of smoke. Soon after, the *milites* (swordsmen) and the light horse advance, scatter in skirmishing order and charge the enemy, whose batteries have already opened fire, although their projectiles pass over the heads of Fabrizio's infantry.[2] The pikes

Principes were fewer in number. It is true, however, that they were disposed so as to be able to open their ranks to the *Acies*, in case of these being obliged to fall back, and that both bodies could fall back among the *Triarii*, who were fewer in number and arranged in far looser ranks. Machiavelli seems to refer sometimes to this legion, sometimes to that described by Vegetius

[1] Here, too, he continually copies from Vegetius. The "Arte della Guerra" may be verified, by comparing pp. 278, 279, 281, 282 and 283 with Vegetius, "De re militari," above-mentioned edition, pp. 21, 22, 31, 33, 35, 87, 88, 89.

Colonna begins by acknowledging that it might perhaps be better "first to encamp the army, then to march it, and lastly to take it into action." But wishing to show how, while on the march, it was possible to suddenly change from marching order to order of battle, he was induced to begin by drawing it up in fighting array as soon as he possibly could.[1] Accordingly he now treats the question of encampments without adding anything new that is worthy of special mention. Here he makes arrangements, no longer for two only, but for four battalions, that is for his entire regular army of 24,000 foot and about 2,000 horse. As the Roman armies consisted of 24,000 foot, and even in extraordinary cases, according to him, seldom exceeded 50,000, and with that number succeeded in vanquishing 200,000 Gauls, so, too, the moderns should follow their example.[2] "It is true that the nations of the East and the West were accustomed to make war with armed multitudes; but the latter depended entirely on their inborn, savage ferocity, the former on the great and general reverence felt for their rulers, and the passive obedience yielded unto them. For the southern populations of Italy and Greece, who were wanting both in native hardihood and passive obedience, it was necessary to recur to discipline, by which the well-organized few were enabled to overcome the fury and obduracy of the many. The ancients succeeded in everything better than ourselves, and especially in warfare; and whoever would imitate them must not collect too numerous armies, for then discipline is disordered and confusion engendered.[3] And towards the firm maintenance of this discipline, Machiavelli suggests that the right of punishment, and to some extent the judicial function, should be vested in a popular tribunal, after the Roman fashion, and according to the practice of the Swiss, among whom offenders against discipline were put to death by their own comrades. "And this," he says, "is a well-conceived idea, for the criminal will find no supporters among those who have punished him."[4] We find certain counsels or suggestions in this book serving to emphasize the great difference of the morality of those times, whether in war or in peace, from that of our own day. Machiavelli, for instance, tells us that some troops abandoned their camp and all its stores to the enemy, in order to take him by surprise when gorged with food and wine, and adds, without comment, that they sometimes ensured success by first mixing poison in the wine.[5]

A more valuable portion of the "Art of War" is that comprised in the seventh and last book, in which the author preludes his

[1] "Arte della Guerra," p. 360. [2] Ibid. lib vi p. 380; Vegetius, bk. ii ch iv.
[3] Ibid, lib. vi p. 380. [4] Ibid., p 376 [5] [3] Ibid., p. 380.

damage on you, without being damaged in return, so is it still easier to encamp in the open field, without losing heart and without presuming the possibility of ever forsaking the old methods. This army of ours, therefore, will always have an advantage over others of modern times, since being better disciplined and better armed it can check the enemy at the first shock and rout him at close quarters; can renew the attack thrice without being thrown into disorder; can easily change front and fight on all sides."[1]

In the fourth and fifth books the handling of the whole army is discussed, and always in conformity with Roman examples. For on this head, never having witnessed a great war, nor the manœuvres of large forces, Machiavelli had little that was novel to suggest from his own experience. The aim he keeps most constantly in view, is that of enabling his army to execute the most complicated manœuvres with great rapidity, even when in presence of the enemy. For this reason, he always objects to a very extended front, considering it to be a source of the utmost danger.[2] His prejudice against firearms did not allow him to foresee that they would lead to the necessity of ever wider and shallower lines.

When the army is ill-provided with cavalry Machiavelli advises that it should be posted among trees and vineyards if possible, as were the Spaniards at the battle of Cerignola. He counsels the employment of the strongest portion of his own army against the weakest part of the opposing force, the better, while falling back on one side, to outflank it on the other.[3] And this was a manœuvre always practised by great captains. Some of his other observations seem suggested rather by plain common sense than by the art of war, although, even as regards the latter, the natural talent of a commander and his knowledge of mankind have always been and will ever be of higher importance than mere technical skill. Machiavelli recommends secrecy in all military enterprises, study of and familiarity with the theatre of war, and says that above all it is highly expedient to place the soldier in the alternative of only being able to find safety in success. "There may be many motives to urge you on, but strongest of all is that which compels you to conquer or to die."[4] The examples adduced in these two books are generally drawn from ancient history.

And so too in the sixth book, when treating of the method of quartering troops, Machiavelli tries to remain faithful to the Romans, although compelled more than once to abandon their teachings on account of the changed condition of the times.

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib iii. pp 293–301. [2] Ibid., iv, p. 314.
[3] Ibid, lib iv. p. 316. [4] Ibid., p. 332.

means the outer moat was filled up, and it was easy for the enemy to storm the breach.

Accordingly, Machiavelli proposed a new system, which he had twice seen tried at Pisa on a very small scale in 1500 and 1505.[1] On these occasions the Florentines had to retreat after making a wide breach in the city wall, because the Pisans had dug a trench behind the wall, and raised an earthwork beyond. The same experiment had been tried on a larger scale, and with still greater success, at Padua in the year 1509, when the whole defence of the city had been conducted on the new principle, and compelled Maximilian's very powerful army to beat an ignominious retreat. Machiavelli, as it is well known, was intimately acquainted with every detail of the Pisan war, and being at Mantua and Verona in the course of 1509, was able to gain accurate information concerning the celebrated defence of Padua. For this made a great sensation at the time:[2] Guicciardini has left us a most minute account of it, and by certain letters he wrote to Machiavelli, we see that he sought information about it at the time of its occurrence.[3]

The system suggested by Machiavelli was this. Walls must be bastioned (*ritorte*) and have many angles, so that the attacking force may be within range from various directions. He also proposed two lines of circumvallation with a wide trench between them. The outer wall was to be at least six feet thick, surmounted by towers at intervals of four hundred feet, and built as high as possible to prevent the enemy from scaling it. Instead of having a trench outside, it was to have one within, and this was to be sixty feet wide and twelve deep, with casemates at the bottom four hundred feet apart. The earth excavated in making the trench was to be thrown up on the side towards the city to serve for the inner walls or earthworks, which were to be sufficiently high to mask the men, and sufficiently solid to bear the heavy artillery that was to respond to the enemy's fire. In this way, he said, should a breach be made in the outer wall, it will happen, as at Pisa, that the masonry, by falling on the side on which it is struck, instead of filling up the ditch behind, will form a rampart increasing its depth, and the enemy will have to face, first this new rampart, then the trench, and after that the second wall defended by the heaviest guns.[4]

Machiavelli does not approve of outer forts or other detached

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. i. pp. 225, 362.
[2] "Storia d'Italia," bk. viii. chap. iv.
[3] *Vide* document vi in Appendix (II.) of Italian edition.
[4] "Arte della Guerra," bk. vii. pp. 394, 395.

final pages by the exposition of some very remarkable theories of fortification. Civil and military engineers, both in Italy and other countries, had long directed their attention to the study of works of defence. But the employment of artillery led to the radical transformation of these also. Lofty old walls were easily demolished by cannon, and loftier towers no longer served to damage the enemy, since it was impossible to carry guns up to their roofs; and stones and other missiles which could be hurled from them were powerless against an enemy able to remain at some distance. Therefore less elevated and more massive constructions were required, upon which it should be possible to plant heavy pieces of cannon. Machiavelli had some experience of all this, both in the camp, before Pisa, and while preparing for the defence of Florence and Prato against the Spanish in 1512. And at a later period he was again obliged to study the question with the celebrated Pietro Navarro, in planning the defence of his native city against the hosts of Charles V.

There is certainly no lack of value and originality in the ideas upon this subject set down in the "Arte della Guerra,"[1] although they occasionally seem to refer to a state of things anterior to the development to which the science of fortification had at that time attained. Machiavelli still wished all walls to be too high to be scaled.[2] For once, however, he here admits the value of artillery, of which he says, "so great is the fury, that a single wall can in no way withstand it."[3] And more than that, he not only recognized what was the fundamental problem of that period, but even suggested a solution of his own. "If the walls are too high," he observes, "it is impossible to plant heavy artillery upon them, and no resistance can be made to that of the enemy, which will easily open a breach; if they are too low they are easily scaled" It had long been sought to remedy this danger by the *rempart* of the French. The wall, still very high, was packed with earth on the inner side, and thus thickened and fortified against the enemy's fire. But this system had one serious defect, already noted by others, and that had come under Machiavelli's personal observation at Pisa. On the opening of a breach in a wall of this sort, the broken fragments always fell in the direction whence the shots came, followed by a shower of earth from the rampart. By this

[1] "Kuhn und scharfsinnig sind seine fortificatorischen Ideen." This is the verdict of Major Jahns in his before-quoted essay in the "Grenzboten," p 556.

[2] "D'après Machiavelli qui dans son 'Art de la Guerre' nous a donné des renseignements applicables à une époque un peu antérieure à celle ou il écrit, le mur doit être aussi haut que possible," &c. (Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, "Du présent, du passé et de l'avenir de l'artillerie," vol. ii p. 106).

[3] "Arte della Guerra," lib. vii p 398.

And now Colonna hastens to make an end, saying that although he might have explained many other matters relating to ancient warfare, his sole object was to speak of what was requisite for the good organization of modern armies He has said nothing of the naval service, being utterly ignorant of it.[1] If you wish to learn what are the qualities required in a good captain, I can be very brief, since it only behoves me to tell you that he must know all the things described above; but that neither will these suffice unless his own wits help him to fresh discoveries, for no one has ever risen to greatness in his profession without invention, and this gift is above all indispensable in war.[2] As I have shown you, there would be no difficulty in reorganizing the militia on the ancient plan; but in order to do so, you would need to be a prince powerful enough to get together fifteen or twenty thousand youths for the purpose of making them good soldiers. And no greater glory could be imagined; since if it be praiseworthy to win a battle with a good army, still more admirable is it to have created a victorious army. Pelopidas, Epaminondas, Philip of Macedon the sire of Alexander, and Cyrus, king of the Persians, were of this number They won success by their sagacity, and by having subjects adapted to their purpose; but no one of them, however excellent, could have accomplished any praiseworthy undertaking in a land similar to Italy, full of corrupt men unused to any honourable obedience. Here it is not enough to be able to command an army; it is requisite first to know how, and have the power to form one, and therefore it is necessary to begin by being prince of an extensive State. I could not be a leader of this kind since I have always commanded foreign armies, mercenary adventurers, men bound to others and not to me. And I leave you to judge whether it be possible to introduce any useful reform among soldiers of their stamp! How could I force them to carry more weapons than usual, or to submit to longer hours of drill? When could they be forced to abstain from the deeds of lust and insolence and cruelty daily committed by them? When could they be made so obedient to discipline, that an apple-tree laden with fruit might stand untouched in the midst of their encampment, as we read was frequently the case among the ancients? What promises can I hold out to them, when, at the end of the war, they have nothing more to do with me?

"How can I teach shame to men born and reared in shamelessness? . . . . In the name of what God and of what saints can I make them swear faith? In the name of those they worship, or of those they blaspheme? Of the gods they may worship,

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib vii p 415 [2] Ibid., p. 416.

works at a distance from the walls, because if these are captured the fortress also is conquered. Accordingly, the ground should be cleared and levelled for the space of a mile from the walls.[1] And in the opinion of modern writers this idea also was new and original at that day. It seems that in Germany something on the plan of Machiavelli's proposed system was suggested by the great intellect of Albert Durer, who may also have derived the idea from the attack and defence of Padua. At any rate, it is certain that the ideas scientifically expounded in the "Art of War" afford additional proof of Machiavelli's marvellous acumen and admirably practical mind.

But so rapid were the changes then introduced by artillery in every system of fortification, that there was no time for the trial of these intermediate schemes, however ingenious they might be, and however successful they may have proved on first experiment.[2]

This would be the place to quote a series of observations made by Machiavelli on improvements in the construction of loopholes and portcullises, of wheels and trucks for the transport of artillery, of draw-bridges, &c. And by these it would be seen that he never allowed any opportunity of observation to escape him, noted all that he saw, and that his remarks were always ingenious and acute and never wanting in practical merit. But we prefer to hasten to the conclusion of the work, which Machiavelli prefaces by a few military maxims or aphorisms of the following kind: "He who starts in disorderly pursuit of the beaten enemy must wish to change from victor to vanquished. Alter your plan, when you perceive that it has been foreseen by the enemy. Sudden accidents are hard to remedy, but anticipated ones are easy to cure. Men, iron, money, and bread are the sinews of war; but the first two are the most necessary of all, for men and iron can gain both money and bread; whereas bread and money cannot serve to obtain men and iron."[3]

[1] "Arte della Guerra," p. 401.

[2] This is the judgment pronounced by Major Jahns at the close of his previously quoted essay: "Machiavelli's Vorschlage ahneln in mancher Beziehung denjenigen, welche Durer zur Verstarkung vorhandener alter Stadtbefestigungen macht; wahrscheinlich hatten beide ihr Vorbild in Padua, dessen vergebliche Belagerung im Jahre 1509 durch Kaiser Maximilian so grosses Aufsehen gemacht hatte; denn diese Stadt war in einer Weise remparirt, welche der von Machiavelli empfohlenen sehr nahe kommt. Wie einsichtig und klardenkend ubrigens Machiavelli in Dingen der Befestigungskunst war, lehrt sein Protokoll uber die Besichtigung der Fortificationen von Florenz durch Navarro, und sein Schreiben an Guicciardini uber enselben Gegenstand (1526) Merkwurdig erscheint es, dass er bereits mit Entschiedenheit, die Forderung eines Rayongesetzes ausspricht und zwar eines viel strengern als es irgend eine neuere Verordnung gethan hat.—Bis zu einer Meile Entfernung von der Festung darf weder Mauerwerk aufgefuhrt, noch auch das Feld bestellt werden."

[3] "Arte della Guerra," lib. vii pp 413, 414

render men enervated and impotent. And had our princes ever read and believed these things, it would have been impossible for them not to have altered their way of life, and thus changed the fortunes of their States.

"But since you have complained of your Militia Ordinance, I will tell you, that if having truly trained it in the way described by me above, it has nevertheless failed to succeed, then, indeed, you have a right to complain: but that if you have not trained and disciplined it as I have directed, then it might move complaint against you, for having created an abortion instead of a perfect shape. So the Venetians and the Duke of Ferrara began in the right way and then ceased to persist in it, wherefore they, not their men, were to blame." "And I declare to you that whichever of the princes now holding States in Italy shall enter first upon this road, he will be first to become lord of this country; and it will be with his State as with the kingdom of Macedon, the which, coming under the sway of Philip who had been taught how to train armies by Epaminondas the Theban, rose to such power by means of this discipline and training, that in a few years Philip was master of the whole of the other Grecian lands which were given up to idleness and play acting, and left his son a foundation enabling him to make himself lord of the world. He then, who, being a prince, should yet despise these ideas, despises his kingdom; if a citizen, his city. And I am ill-content with nature, for either she should have withheld from me knowledge of these things, or given me power to execute them. Nor, being aged, can I longer hope for any opportunity of executing them, and therefore I have been liberal with you, who, being young and gifted, may be able, if my words have found favour with you, to forward or suggest them at the fitting moment in aid of your princes. And I would wish you to feel neither dismay nor distrust, for this land seems born to give new life to dead things, as has been seen in poetry and painting and sculpture. But as regards myself, being already advanced in years, I certainly feel no hope. Yet, truly, had fortune in past times granted me a State wide enough for a similar enterprise, I believe that I could have speedily shown the world the great value of ancient military methods; and doubtless I should either have gloriously aggrandized my State or lost it without dishonour." [1]

Here, then, we behold upon the stage the kingly deliverer, who is to save the country by force of arms, after the likeness of Philip of Macedon. And this is the connecting link between the "Art of War" and the "Prince":—The first Italian who will follow

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib. vii. pp. 419-423.

I know nothing; but I well know that they blaspheme against all. . . . How can those who take God's name in vain feel reverence for men? Into what good shape then would it be possible to mould such material?"[1]

"The Swiss and Spanish, although far from perfect, are much better than Italians, who from lack of good discipline are the disgrace of the world. Not that the people are to blame, but rather the princes, who have reaped their punishment by losing their States with ignominy and without giving any proof of virtue. And the excessive badness of all existing methods of training is clearly shown by the fact that after the numerous wars occurring in Italy, from the descent of Charles VIII. to the present day, our armies, instead of improving by practice in warfare, have grown continually worse. Nor is there any other remedy than the one which I have indicated, that, namely, of finding a prince with the ability and power to form an army of rough men, as yet unspoiled by the present bad methods of training. It is easier to mould rough and uncultured minds into a fresh shape than corrupt minds, just as a good sculptor can carve a better statue from a block of unhewn marble than from one badly cut into shape."

"Our Italian princes, before experiencing the shocks of foreign wars, were accustomed to believe that it was sufficient for a prince to be able to devise a sharp answer in his writing office, to pen a fine epistle, show wit and readiness in his words and sayings, be able to lay schemes, deck himself with gold and gems, sleep and eat with greater luxury than other men, surround himself with many sensual delights, rule his subjects with avarice and haughtiness, become rotten with sloth, confer military promotion as a favour; . . . nor did the poor wretches foresee that they were thus preparing themselves to fall a prey to the first enemy that should assail them. Hence, in the year 1494, came terrible alarms, sudden flights, and miraculous defeats, and thus three of the most powerful States of Italy have been repeatedly pillaged and laid waste."

"And still worse is it that the surviving princes persist in the same error and in the same disorder: nor do they reflect how those who wished to preserve their States in the olden times, held the first rank among combatants, and when fortune went against them, preferred to lose their life together with their State, so that they either lived or died with honour. Although certain of them might be charged with exceeding ambition or ferocity, they could not be accused of supineness nor of any slothful habit fitted to

[1] "Arte della Guerra," lib. vii. pp. 418, 419.



CHAPTER IX.

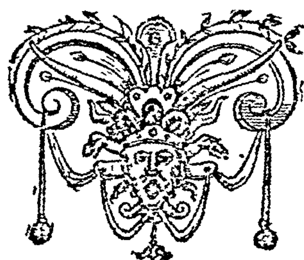
Machiavelli is commissioned to write his "Histories"—Soderini tries to dissuade him from accepting—His journey to Carpi and correspondence with Guicciardini—Pope Adrian VI.—New proposals of reform in Florence—Plot against the Medici, and condemnation of the conspirators.



WHILE many men, including Cardinal dei Medici himself, were reading and pondering the "Art of War," the "Life of Castruccio Castracani" had already, as we have seen, passed through the hands of all the guests of the Oricellarii Gardens, and been already a subject of dispute among them. All, however, agreed in considering it a positive proof of Machiavelli's singular aptitude for the historic style, and accordingly encouraged him to again try his skill in that way. Many of these friends were persons of influence in Florence at the time, and their verdict obtained some useful results for him. In fact, in the November of 1520 he was commissioned by the directors of the Studio to write a history of Florence Cardinal dei Medici, as provisional Archbishop of Florence, was also head of the Studio, and conferred Academic degrees, in virtue of a bull of Leo X. (31st of January, 1515), confirming the privileges already granted by the Emperor, Charles IV.[1] Therefore it must have been chiefly owing to the Cardinal that this commission was given to Machiavelli, who, indeed, when the former became Pope Clement VII., dedicated the "Histories" to him, and at a later period received a subsidy from him for their continuation. The negotiations were conducted by Francesco del

[1] Prezziner, "Storia del Pubblico Studio," &c., vol i. pp 201, 202, document xii.

my councils, shall, to his immortal honour, succeed in the magnanimous enterprise of freeing his country.—This, Machiavelli had said to Giuliano and Lorenzo dei Medici; this, he had repeated to his friends in the Oricellarii Gardens, and written in his "Discourse on the reforming of Florence," to Cardinal dei Medici and Leo X.; this he again repeats in the "Art of War." And if in this last work his idea shines forth more clearly than elsewhere, and his admiration for virtue appears more explicit, his patriotism purer and more ardent, this solely results from the subject that he had to treat. But if he could speak so plainly now that he was finally in contact with the Medici, and for the first time in his life had certain hopes of their favour, surely no one need believe that he could have intended to express different ideas, or seen reason to disguise his patriotism, when writing the "Discourses" and the "Prince" during the lifetime of Giuliano and Lorenzo, of whom the former, at least, was undoubtedly of a gentler disposition than either Cardinal or Pope.



devote some time to preparatory studies, further prolonged by various interruptions. And then, from a quarter whence it was least to be expected, he actually received advice to refuse the task entrusted to him, in favour of another offer of a very different nature. Piero Soderini, the ex-Gonfalonier, after having written to him from Ragusa [1] to make suggestions which seem to have been rejected, ceased all communication with him on his return to Rome, nor do we find further records of any continued correspondence between them. On the contrary, we have seen what numerous precautions were employed by both, for the purpose of averting dangerous suspicions Suddenly, however, Soderini broke the long silence, by writing to him from Rome on the 13th of April, 1521: "Since the proposal I sent you from Ragusa did not suit you, I have taken the opportunity of suggesting your name to Prospero Colonna, who is in search of a secretary, and he has instantly accepted you, knowing that you are to be depended upon. The remuneration will consist of two hundred gold ducats and all your expenses If this content you, set out at once, and without conferring with any one, so that your departure hence may not be known until your arrival there. It would be impossible to find you anything better than this, and it seems to me decidedly preferable to remaining where you are, and writing histories at so many *sealed* florins a piece." [2] What could have caused this sudden revival of interest and unsolicited kindness, this strange contempt for an engagement to pen histories, with a subsidy from the Florentine Studio, at a time when all Italian writers accepted the

initiatis ut supra (die prima mensis martii prox preteriti (at sheet 145*t*)," (at sheet 146*t*) * * * * * *

"Niccholao ec, c. s'

After this time the Studio, with some of its records, was transferred to Pisa, only a few professorial chairs being retained in Florence. The "Libri dello Studio" for the years 1521–25 are wanting in the Pisan Archives; but in an account book there for the year 1526, at sheet 24*t*, we find these entries: "Ad li ministri ('dello Studio fiorentino e del' pisano):" "A Francesco del Nero fior. ottanta quattro di suggello, 84."

"A Niccolò Machiavelli fiorini centosettantacinque di suggello, 175"

The succeeding registers down to 1544 are missing. For the above entries, proving that the subsidy was continued for several years, we are indebted to Signor Tanfani Centofanti of the Pisan Archives.

[1] This letter, which is written in an almost unintelligible jargon, is No. xli. in the "Opere," vol. viii. p 147. It was transcribed by Ricci from the annotated but very obscure original. He does not state whether it was an autograph, and does not inform us who was the author of the marginal notes copied by him into the codex from which we have given many quotations. These notes, however, by no means lessen the obscurity of Soderini's letter.

[2] This letter is in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i p. lxxxix. The original is in the "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No 40.

Nero, administrator of the Studio, who was related to Machiavelli. The latter drew up his own stipulations, namely, that for a number of years and in return for a salary, the amount of which is not stated, he was to employ himself upon the history of Florence, "from whatever period he might think fit to select, and either in the Latin or Tuscan tongue, according to his taste."[1] The directors came to their decision on the 8th of November, 1520, engaging Machiavelli (*conducendolo*) for two years, one certain, the other at their pleasure, with a yearly salary of one hundred florins, and the obligation of being at their orders, in case they should demand other work from him.[2]

Machiavelli at once set to work, but was naturally obliged to

[1] These stipulations are in a letter of Machiavelli's to Del Nero, that is, in the Florence Archives, and was first published by Professor Corazzini in his "Miscellanea di cose inedite e rare" (Florence, 1853), p. 114. It was afterwards given in completer form in the "Opere" of Machiavelli (Florence, Usigli, 1857, at p 1198), and has been recently re-published in the "Vita di N. Machiavelli" of Signor Amico. We reproduce it here:

"Spectabilis vir,

"Let this be the substance of the agreement. That the agreement be made for so many years, with a salary to be paid yearly, &c, binding and obliging the recipient to write the annals or history of the things done by the State and city of Florence, from whatever period he shall think fittest, and in either the Latin or Tuscan tongue, as may seem most convenient to him."

NICOLAUS MACHIAVELLI.

Honorando cognato, Francisco del Nero.

[2] The decision of the directors was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), p lxxxix. We give it below, adding the memoranda of the first instalments paid to Machiavelli, and which are also recorded in the "Libro degli stipendiati per lo Studio, dal 1514 al 1521," preserved in the Florence Archives

"Die viij. mensis novembrio M.D XX. Conduxerunt Niccholaum de Machiavellis civem florentinum ad serviendum dicto eorum officio, et inter alia ad componendum annalia et cronacas florent. Et alia faciendum, que et prout dictis dominis officialibus fuerit expediens pro tempore et termino duorum annorum initiatorum die prima presentis mensis novembris, uno scilicet firmo, altero verum ad beneplacitum dictorum dominorum officialium cum salario quolibet anno florenorum centum, ad rationem librorum quatuor pro quolibet floreno solvendorum de quatuor mensibus in quatuor menses cum taxis obligationibus et aliis consuetis" (sheet 104).

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"Die xiij. junii M.D.XXJ." (sheet 144).

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"Item infrascriptis eorum ministris servientibus tam Florentie quam Pisis, pro dictis quatuor mensibus initiatis et finitis ut supra" (initiat. die prima mensis novembris proxime preteriti) (at sheet 144[1]), (at sheet 145).

* * * * * *

"Niccholao domini Bernardi de Machiavellis, fl. 33. 6 8." (at sheet 145[1]).

* * * * * *

"Item infrascriptis eorum ministris ec, c. s., pro dictis quatuor mensibus

it strongly, even in the Cardinal's name, upon the Minister-general and the assessors of the chapter, and the request was backed by two favourable briefs from the Pope, the friars quibbled over the sense of the words, and declared that the matter must be brought before the General Assembly. Whereupon, weary of an affair that, in his hands, seemed to assume a ridiculous aspect, he suddenly took his departure. On the road he halted for a few days at Modena, partly by the Cardinal's desire, in order to visit Guicciardini, then papal governor of that city, and partly also because hasty riding was hurtful to him, as he was threatened with an attack of the stone.[1]

The sole importance of this mission consists in the correspondence exchanged during its course, between Machiavelli at Carpi and Guicciardini at Modena. They joked each other on the affair of the preacher and the monks, and Machiavelli, annoyed at being compelled to waste his time, vented his biting spirit of satire in the liveliest style. Guicciardini wrote on the 17th of May, wishing him all success in the affair of the preacher and that he might satisfy the expectations of the Consuls of the Woollen Guild, "and in a way befitting your honour, which would certainly be tarnished, if at your age you gave yourself to devotion (*all'anima*),[2] for as you have always professed contrary opinions, it will be supposed that you have become imbecile rather than good."

He hoped that his friend would make haste, since he ran two dangers by remaining there: "first *that you may catch hypocrisy from those monks*, secondly that the Carpi air may turn you into a liar, since such is its usual effect, not only in this age but for many centuries past."[3]

Machiavelli replied to him the same day in an equally ironical strain. His time was wasted in waiting for the monks to elect the general and assessors. Therefore he begged Guicciardini, when taking a drive, to push as far as Carpi to pay him a visit, or at least send a second runner on with a letter, since the monks would hold him in much higher consideration if they saw frequent

[1] *Vide* Machiavelli's letter to Cardinal dei Medici, in the "Opere," vol. vii pp 445-449

[2] The words in italics are missing from every edition of the "Opere," and are indicated by dots There is a note to the effect that the original manuscript must have fallen into the hands of some pious person, who erased from this and the following letter all the more licentious words and those most disrespectful to religion. But they are intact in the copy contained in the Ricci Codex, from which we have taken them

[3] "Opere," vol. viii. pp 155, 156.

aid of wealthy patrons, and it was deemed an enviable honour to be the official historian of any State whether great or small? The explanation may easily be guessed. The Soderini, aided by the French, were, as we shall soon find, actually engaged in a plot against the Medici, and even the ex-Gonfalonier had laid aside his prolonged neutrality in order to take part in it. Hence it was natural that he should be very ill-pleased to discover that his former secretary was, at this moment, gaining favour with the Medici, and natural that he should show all this eagerness to remove him from Florence. Prospero Colonna was in the service of the Spaniards, the enemies of the French; accordingly, were it even discovered from whom Machiavelli had received this proposal, its author would be in no way compromised, although secrecy was preferred, and therefore strongly recommended.

But it was totally impossible for Machiavelli to accept so unexpected an offer, and at the very moment when his position in Florence was really on the point of improvement. Barely quit of the old persecutions and suspicions, he ran the risk of having his property confiscated were he to leave the city suddenly, against the will of the Medici, and at the suggestion of their foes. For the Soderini were already declared enemies, although not yet known to be conspirators. Therefore Machiavelli not only continued his labours on the "Histories," but also accepted another temporary commission entrusted to him by the Cardinal in a letter of the 11th of May, 1521, signed by Niccolò Michelozzi, secretary of the Eight *di Pratica*. This obliged him to go to Carpi, where the full chapter of the Frati Minori was then sitting, to request, in the name of the Signory and the Cardinal, the separation of the Frati Minori established in the Florentine territory from the other brethren of that order in Tuscany, so that they might be subject to stricter superintendence and correction, for the advancement of religion and decorum, which were both on the decline in those communities.[1] And to add to the singularity of this commission, a very strange one to be assigned to Machiavelli, he had barely arrived at Carpi when he received another epistle, dated the 14th of May, by which the Consuls of the Woollen Guild, having the charge of Santa Maria del Fiore, begged him to obtain permission from the Superior of the Order for the coming to Florence of a certain Frà Rovaio, whom they had invited to preach in the cathedral the following Lent.[2] Machiavelli seems to have taken the matter very lightly, and paid little or no attention to it, especially as Frà Rovaio himself showed no desire to preach in Florence. As to the decree of separation, although he urged

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. pp 439-41. [2] Ibid., (P. M.), vol. vi. pp 215, 216.

condition reminded him of that of Lysander, obliged to distribute rations of meat to the very men he had led to victory.[1] He thought it deplorable that a man formerly employed on missions to so many kings and emperors should now be compelled to "play the lick-spittle to the sandalled Republic." He congratulated him on being commissioned to write the "Histories," said that he was "*ut plurimum*, of more extravagant opinions than the generality, and an inventor of new and out-of-the-way things." He then resumed his jests[2] Machiavelli replied in the same mirthful tone, and wound up by saying that, at least, he had been treated to excellent repasts and was quite filled out And thus ended a mission that Guicciardini justly designated as a farce. It could not go on any longer, for the monks were beginning to discern that Machiavelli was making fun of them.

Having returned to Florence, he applied himself to his history and other literary undertakings; but shortly after occurred the death of Leo X., and the many changes caused by that event. Hostilities were suspended, for want of the Papal supplies, which had chiefly served to carry them on; the Spaniards were obliged to dismiss the German infantry and nearly all the Swiss. This was the signal for the uprisal of those who had long been trodden under foot. Francesco Maria della Rovere recovered Urbino, Pesaro, Montefeltro, and even St Leo, which had already been given to the Florentines, although all that now remained to them was the district of Sestino. Sigismondo Varano, the former lord of Camerino, re-entered his State, and expelled his uncle, Giammaria, who had been installed in it by Leo X. Alfonso d'Este recovered nearly all his dominions, but could not regain Modena and Reggio; and Parma, defended by its governor, Francesco Guicciardini, in the interests of the Papacy, repulsed an attack upon its walls. Later, Malatesta and Orazio Baglioni both returned to Perugia. Meanwhile, the Conclave had arrived at no decision after a fortnight's session. Cardinal Wolsey, Cardinal dei Medici, Cardinal Soderini, and others were candidates for the Papal See. Matters dragged on so slowly that Medici, perceiving that his own hour had not yet struck, and that even his power in Florence was endangered by his lengthened absence, proposed a foreign candidate, who was far away and almost unknown. The proposal was accepted, and Adrian Dedel, a native of Utrecht, Cardinal of Tortosa, and former preceptor of Charles V., was duly elected under the name of Adrian VI.

So great was the indignation of the people at the election of

[1] He alludes to the account given by Plutarch in his "Life of Lysander."
[2] Letter of the 18th of May, 1521, "Opere," vol. viii. pp. 159-161.

messengers come to him.[1] "For I can tell you that at the sight of your crossbowman carrying the letter and bowing down to the ground and saying that he had been sent expressly and in haste, every one rose with so many reverences and so much noise that all was in a turmoil and many came to me to ask the news. And I, in order to swell my importance, replied: that the Emperor was expected at Trent, and that the Swiss had summoned new Diets, and that the King of France wished to seek an interview with the former sovereign; although these advisers of his dissuaded him from the journey. So all stood open-mouthed and cap in hand; and as I write this I have a circle around me, who seeing me write at so much length are vastly astonished and gaze on me as on one possessed; and I, to increase their astonishment, sometimes stop my pen and puff out my cheeks, and thereupon they foam at the mouth, and if they only knew what I was saying to you they would marvel still more."

Regarding the mendacity of the men of Carpi, and the hypocrisy of the monks, Machiavelli, with an irony that was positively cynical, replied that he had no fear of those things, since he was long past master in them, so that even when speaking the truth he enveloped it in falsehood.[2] And then followed a few more letters in the same vein. Guicciardini, in a moment of comparative gravity, wrote that Machiavelli's present

[1] Guicciardini really despatched a second courier, with a letter of the 18th of May, 1521, that is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case v. No. 111. *Vide* Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition, document x.

[2] "Opere," vol. viii. pp. 156-169, letter lxix. Subjoined are the words that were suppressed in the printed versions, and in the same order as the breaks that are indicated by dots in this letter:

predicatore;	*preacher;*
insegnasse la via	*should teach the way*
d'andare in casa il diavolo;	*to go to the devil;*
pazzo che il Ponzo, più versato che	*as mad as Ponzo, wilier than*
frà Girolamo, più ipocrito che	*Frà Girolamo, more hypocritical*
rate Alberto;	*than Frà Alberto;*
tristo;	*rascally;*
mantello della religione;	*cloak of religion;*
pestando i fanghi di S. Francesco;	*treading the mud of St. Francis;*
scandalo;	*scandal;*
alle zoccolate;	*with sandal-kicks.*
questi frati dicono che quando uno è confermato in grazia, il diavolo non ha più potenza di tentarlo. Cosi is non ho paura che questi frati mi appichino la ipocrisia, perchè io credo essere assai ben confermato;	*these friars declare that when one is well confirmed in grace, the devil has no more power to tempt him. Accordingly I am not afraid of catching hypocrisy of these monks, since I hold myself to be very well confirmed;*
nè credo mai quel che io dico; frà tante bugie;	*nor do I ever believe that which I say; among so many lies;*

of patriots like Nardi, succeeded better than had been expected, and decidedly better than Giuliano and Lorenzo, who had bestowed little or no attention on the city. For the Cardinal was gentle-mannered, sharp witted and patient, sufficiently cautious in his habits to avoid scandal, fond of the city and anxious for its embellishment. He constructed a canal to prevent the overflow of the Arno, fortified the town walls, and without being a great Mæcenas, gave his patronage to scholars and artists.[1] Nevertheless he had many and perilous enemies. There were the lovers of liberty in Florence, and the Soderini without, to whom he was now an object of the fiercest hatred. The latter had never forgiven the Medici their broken promise of a matrimonial alliance. Cardinal Soderini had been concerned in Petrucci's conspiracy against Leo X., and a very active rival of Cardinal dei Medici in the last Conclave. The same rivalry would be inevitable on the death of Adrian. For all these reasons the Soderini, who had first joined the French in order to combat Medici's election, now made a still firmer alliance against him, in order to oppose his government in Florence, where, being aided therein by the ex-Gonfalonier, they succeeded in winning numerous adherents.

The gravest discontent had arisen among the youths frequenting the meetings in the Oricellarii Gardens, although nearly all had been originally partisans of the Medici. As easily happened in those days, some had been alienated by purely personal reasons; others, such as Zanobi Buondelmonti, Luigi Alamanni and Jacopo da Diacceto, men of classical training, and animated by an ardent desire to accomplish something extraordinary that should make their names famous, had been gradually worked up to a pitch of exaltation by listening to the teachings of Machiavelli. The latter, who was now over fifty years of age, and certainly never thought of conspiracy, was not aware that his writings, and still more his spoken words, had produced on the minds of these youthful hearers any other than a merely literary or scientific effect. He continued to address them enthusiastically on the subject of the Roman Republic and Italy, of the nation in arms, of great men exalted to heaven on a level with the gods, for having sacrificed substance, life and soul to their country. And meanwhile certain of his hearers began to come to an understanding with the Soderini, and join in their plots, without breathing a syllable of it to him or to their other associates, many of whom were still friends of the Cardinal and frequently in his house. The Cardinal himself, either in good or ill faith, had also aided in inflaming the minds of these youths. Whether it was that he actually meditated

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii pp 73, 75.

this foreign Pope, that many wrote over their doors: *Roma est locanda.* And the discontent became general when Adrian was personally known. Born on the 2nd of March, 1459, raised to the papacy on the 9th of January, 1522, he could not speak the language of the Italians, and pronounced Latin in a fashion that was almost unintelligible to them. Being a man of culture and of spotless life, he reduced the expenses of his Court to the lowest possible sum. But this measure only served to increase his unpopularity. His aim was to devote himself earnestly to religion and Church reform; to abjure festivities and drive away poets and artists; but no one heeded his exhortations. He found himself suddenly transplanted to an entirely unknown world, where no one understood him, no one loved him. Pasquin cut continual jokes at his expense, and instead of laughing at them as the Romans laughed, was so highly incensed by them, that one day he desired the statue to be cast into the Tiber. But the Duke of Sessa warned him that Pasquin would go on speaking all the same, since, like the frogs, he was quite capable of talking under water. All Romans, and especially the artists and *literati* who were now deprived of court patronage, were furious against the new Pope and his favourites, whose very names were unpronounceable.

> "Ecco che personaggi, ecco che Corte,
> Che brigate, galanti cortigiane,
> Copis, Vincl, Corizio e Trincheforte,
> Nomi da far sbigottire un cane." [1]

So wrote Berni in his Capitolo against the election of the new Pope, and the forty "*poltroon*" Cardinals who had voted for him, and whom the satirical poet overwhelmed with invectives. Accordingly Adrian VI. gained nothing but misery by his tiara, but fortunately had not to bear its burden long, since on the 14th of September, 1523, he drew his last breath. Thereupon there was great rejoicing in the Eternal City, and the door of the physician who had attended him,[2] was decorated with garlands, and the inscription: *Ob Urbem servatam.*

Meanwhile novelties of another sort were occurring in Florence. Cardinal dei Medici was a prudent ruler, and even in the opinion

[1] "Behold what personages, what a pretty court, what a gallant string of courtiers! Copis, Vincl, Corizio and Trincheforte! Names fitted to scare a dog!" Berni, "Opere Burlesche." London, 1723, vol. i. p 77.

[2] Gregorovius, "Geschichte," vol. viii. p 392 and fol.; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," lib. ii chap iii.; Ranke, "Die Romischen Papste," lib. i. chap iii.; Reumont, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," lib. viii. part ii.; Constantin Ritter von Hofler, "Papst Adrian VI." (1522–23), Wien, Braumuller, 1880.

with the Cardinal, would be temporarily vested the whole authority of the Florentine people for the making of new laws and statutes. But in order that this measure might prove really beneficial to liberty, this Council extraordinary was only to last one year, without power of prorogation or renewal.[1]

At this time Machiavelli also composed another short pamphlet on the burgher militia, trying to prove that the sole way to obtain a good Ordinance was by re-constituting it on a larger scale, as in the time of Soderini, instead of reducing it to a handful of armed men, as had been done by the Medici, the which made it practically useless.[2]

There was great belief in the goodness of the Cardinal's intentions. Filippo dei Nerli, a frequenter of the Oricellarii Gardens, but always a firm adherent to the *Palle*, relates how divided the city was at that time, and how much men's minds were relieved by these new expectations. After telling us that, in consequence of this, several projects of reform were prepared, he adds: "Zanobi Buondelmonti and even Niccolò Machiavelli showed their minds very plainly in this way; for I saw their writings, and all went into the hands of the Cardinal, who pretended to value them very highly. Alessandro dei Pazzi wrote a very beautiful and elegant Latin oration, expressive of the people's gratitude to the Cardinal for the restoration of the Republic, and it was read with much applause, in the presence of many citizens at a supper." He goes on to say that matters were pushed so far that the Cardinal began to desire to check them, and no longer knew how to do so.[3] But although Jacopo Nardi spoke of the Cardinal's administration, in his "Histories," in very laudatory terms, he plainly accuses him of "deceit" on this occasion, and says that "he abused the good faith of certain, perhaps over-credulous, citizens, who were all the more easily tricked by seeing that he gave no ear to the complaints and remonstrances of trusty adherents, by whom he was warned

[1] This second project of reform, from Machiavelli's pen, was first brought out by A d'Ancona in a pamphlet published on the occasion of the Cavaliere-Zabban marriage, 16th of October, 1872, and entitled: "Due Scritture di Niccolò Machiavelli" Pisa, Nistri, 1872. It was afterwards republished in Signor Amico's "Vita di N. Machiavelli," p. 550 and fol. The original is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case i No. 79.

[2] This autograph composition is among the "Carte del Machiavelli," case i. No. 63 *Vide* Appendix (III) of the Italian edition, document xi. Signor Amico gave a fragment of it at p. 269 of his "Vita di N. Machiavelli." He considers it to be the rough sketch of a letter written to Cardinal Soderini when the Ordinance was first established. But an attentive perusal shows it to be no letter, but a proposal addressed to the Cardinal in order to re-establish the Ordinance for the second time.

[3] Filippo dei Nerli, "Commentarii," pp 137, 138.

carrying out the theory expounded to him by Machiavelli, and re-organizing the Republic in such a way that at his death it might become really independent; whether the speedy hope of attaining to the papal crown made him think of the time when Florence would be deprived of his presence, and with no legitimate heirs to succeed him; or whether—and this is quite probable—he sought to discover the names of the malcontents by fomenting their illusions, it is positive that he interrogated many on the manner of re-constituting and re-organizing the Republic, seemed to receive their replies with avidity and to study them with care. Then, to inspire all with additional faith in his words, he allowed himself to be continually seen pacing his own garden in the company of the poet Girolamo Benivieni, the ardent follower of Savonarola.[1]

Thus it came about that new proposals of reform were presented to him by Zanobi Buondelmonti, Alessandro dei Pazzi and Niccolò Machiavelli. The first of these proposals no longer exists, but was seen and has been recorded by Nerli. That of Pazzi, which was afterwards published, suggested a perpetual Gonfalonier, a Grand Council and a Senate composed of life members, sitting in rotation and holding the chief power in their hands[2] And as was natural in a supporter of aristocratic government, Pazzi did not approve of the proposal already made to Leo X. by Machiavelli. But the latter now repeated it to the Cardinal, with certain modifications rendering it more explicit and giving it exactly the form of a decree.

"Our High and Magnificent Lords (Magnifici ed Eccelsi Signori), considering that there can be nothing more praiseworthy than the ordering of a united and free republic, in which all private interests yield to the common welfare, and the cravings of vain-glory are extinguished, being comforted and encouraged by our most Reverend Lord His Eminence Cardinal Giulio dei Medici, and invoking the name of the Almighty, do provide and decree," &c. Thus ran the first sentence of the proposed decree, re-confirming the Greater Council in the authority it held before 1512; providing for the election of a Gonfalonier every three years, annulling the Councils of the People, the Commune and the Hundred, and transforming the Council of Sixty into a senate or new Council of the Hundred, with the same powers held by the Eighty previous to 1512. Machiavelli also desired that the Signory in office should elect twelve citizens over forty-five years of age, in whom, together

[1] Nardi, "Storia di Firenze," vol. ii pp. 74, 75.

[2] *Vide* the "Discorso" of Pazzi in the "Archivio Storico," vol. i. p. 420 and fol

the bad turn their affairs were taking in Lombardy, and the Conclave which, pending the arrival of Adrian, still exercised authority in Rome, showed itself hostile to the enterprise. Thereupon Renzo da Ceri lost courage to proceed and retraced his steps.[1]

These facts furnished abundant proofs that the Medici counted many adversaries both within and without the walls of Florence; adversaries, too, of abundant courage and resource. It was to discover the names of these enemies that the Cardinal continued to promote still livelier discussions on the reconstitution of the Republic. This measure was neither wanting in sagacity, nor altogether unsuccessful. For the poet Luigi Alamanni, Zanobi Buondelmonti, Jacopo da Diacceto and other youths of the Oricellarii Gardens, were banded with Soderini in a plot against his life. Battista della Palla was their agent in Rome, and they only awaited the success of Renzo da Ceri's expedition to unsheath their daggers. And when this hope failed them, the better to avoid detection, they were louder than others in their acclamations of the generosity shown by the Cardinal in promising to give Florence a republic. In this way they not only hoped to save their lives, but to achieve freedom, without running the risk of a conspiracy that had no longer any chance of success[2] But as many others expressed the same opinions with entire sincerity, it was not yet possible for the Cardinal to distinguish his friends from his enemies.

Chance, however, came to his aid. A courier was captured just at this time who had carried despatches and intelligence between Battista della Palla and the conspirators in Florence. When this man confessed to having spoken with Jacopo da Diacceto, the latter was instantly cast into prison. The poet, Luigi Alamanni, who had taken a prominent part in the conspiracy, happened to be in the country and was warned in time. So hurried was his flight, that he forgot to give the alarm to his cousin Luigi di

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol. ii. p. 85; Capponi, "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," vol ii. p. 336; Pitti, "Storia Fiorentina," p 125.

[2] "But when Signor Renzo's attempt did not succeed as was expected by the conspirators, who were waiting to execute their design until that enterprise should have some happy result, but on the contrary failed, then Zanobi and Luigi found themselves implicated in the plot without being able to carry it out; and fearing lest it should be discovered through their having talked of it too freely, were therefore foremost among those who urgently solicited the Cardinal dei Medici to carry out the designs related above and all the vain speeches that were going round as to the new government reforms, inasmuch as it seemed to them that if this could be achieved, they would be secured against all danger from the discovery of their plot, which could be ill carried into effect now that the Cardinal dei Medici had contrived to parry the attack of Signor Renzo in the way that we have seen" (Nerli, "Commentarii," p 138).

that he was playing a dangerous game." The Cardinal's real intentions only began to be apparent when Pazzi presented him with the oration in praise of the restoration of liberty. For he replied that he was too much occupied at that moment to have time to read it; that it had better be consigned to Niccolò della Magna. And this individual, the German Niccolò Schomberg, who was in the Cardinal's secrets, coldly remarked after reading it: "I am truly pleased with your oration, but cannot approve of its theme."[1]

Then it was clearly seen that the very reverend Monsignore had made a fine use of his craft, and deceived ingenuous minds, without however entrapping those of keener wits. In fact, at the last Conclave, he had realized that the hatred of the Soderini was inextinguishable, that they were engaged in some plot, conjointly with the French and some of his own personal enemies in Florence, and, as we have seen, this had forced him to hasten his return. He certainly could not be ignorant that Battista della Palla, having been refused certain favours he sought to obtain, was no longer a friend but a foe of the Medici, and also was now tarrying in Rome to confer with the Soderini and carrying on an active correspondence with Florence. But it was neither easy to discover to whom he wrote nor what he was scheming.

After the death of Leo X., Malatesta and Orazio Baglioni, accompanied by the Duke of Urbino, had entered the Siennese territory, in order to attempt the overthrow of the government. They had been urged to this enterprise by Cardinal Soderini, who, being an enemy of Petrucci, the Medicean governor of that city, hoped, by this preliminary step, to facilitate the expulsion of the Medici from Florence. Cardinal Giulio defeated this enterprise by means of his Swiss and German mercenaries; and afterwards succeeded in engaging the Baglioni themselves and the Duke of Urbino in his service. But before long another expedition was made against Sienna, also at the instigation of Cardinal Soderini, by Lorenzo Orsini of the Roman Campagna, nicknamed Renzo da Ceri, who marched thither at the head of his vassals. And a small band of French soldiery set out from Genoa for the same purpose. But this second attempt likewise was quickly repressed, for the Cardinal had been careful to hire an adequate force of foot soldiers and men-at-arms. The French were recalled on account of

[1] Nardi, vol. ii pp. 83, 84. Also Jacopo Pitti gives a full account of all this affair in his "Storia Fiorentine," lib. ii p 122 ("Archivio Storico," vol. i.) He says that the decree for the reformed government was drawn up, and at p 124 he epitomizes it, giving a summary of the very *provvisione* that Machiavelli had written, thus proving that the latter had prepared it by the Cardinal's authorization.

ment and greater obduracy. All these reasons combined to call Machiavelli back to a quieter life in his country home. It was there that he worked at his "Histories" and completed various other literary works, among which his comedies occupy the first rank. Of these latter it now behoves us to speak.



Tommaso Alamanni, also in the plot, and who was seized in Arezzo, where he was then staying. Zanobi Buondelmonti first learnt that all was discovered while strolling through the city with Filippo dei Nerli. He ran to his own house to hide, but his wife gave him what money she had, and persuaded him to fly. Accordingly, he first fled to the Garfagnana, where his friend Lodovico Ariosto was then governor ; and afterwards, in company with Alamanni, sought refuge in France. Summary justice meanwhile was being dealt in Florence. Jacopo da Diacceto, on being put to the torture, unhesitatingly confessed : "I wish to rid myself of this pumpkin of a body : we intended to kill the Cardinal." And he added that they had decided to do so from no hatred towards him, but for love of liberty, and because they knew that he lied when promising them reforms.[1] The trial ended, Diacceto and Luigi di Tommaso Alamanni were both beheaded before daybreak on the 7th of June, 1522. Fresh investigations and decrees of punishment then followed. Nearly all the Soderini were proclaimed rebels ; the ex-Gonfalonier was cited before the tribunal, but as he died on the 13th of June, his property was confiscated, and his memory sentenced to damnation.[2] Some other individuals were also taken and tried, but without anything further being discovered, since the only real culprits were already dead or in exile. Cardinal Soderini did not desist from plotting with the French against the Spaniards ; but Adrian VI., who already, if with much moderation, openly favoured the latter, soon put an end to this by imprisoning him in the Castle of St. Angelo. Thus tranquillity was re-established even in Florence, and nothing more was heard of the promised restoration of liberty.

This plot, and its sanguinary repression, naturally dispersed the society of the Orti Oricellarii. By great good luck no suspicion fell upon Machiavelli, although some blame attached to him for the discourses by which, even if involuntarily, he had inflamed the minds of the younger and more impetuous of his hearers. Nevertheless, Cardinal dei Medici did not deprive him of his favour, but his speedy election to the pontificate left the government of Florence, as we shall see, in the clumsy grasp of the Cardinal of Cortona, who ruled the city in the Pope's name with less judg-

[1] Nardi, "Storia," vol ii. p. 89.

[2] *Et mortuus non posset damnari*, so runs the sentence. *Vide* the documents relating to this conspiracy, published in the "Giornale Storico degli Archivi Toscani," vol. iii. p. 123 and fol. Florence, Vieusseux. The sentence relating to Piero Soderini is at pp 133, 134. He died and was buried in Rome. In the choir of the Carmine church in Florence, which was built by his family, there is a monument by Benedetto da Rovezzano, which it is said was intended by Soderini for his own sepulchre.

principal dialogues. The masks (or conventional personages) of this "Commedia dell' Arte," Pantaloon, Harlequin, Punch and Brighella, are probably slowly transformed survivals of the characters of the Mimes and Atellanæ.

Then, during the Renaissance there came about something very similar to that which had formerly taken place in Rome. Both from the "Sacre Rappresentazioni" already attaining to a notable literary development, and from the already flourishing "Commedia dell' Arte," a national drama and comedy might easily have been derived, had not men reverted instead to imitations of the tragedy and comedy of the ancient world. In an age when scepticism invaded every mind, when all political institutions were in process of dissolution, when the nation was incapable of reconstituting itself, and the torrent of foreign invasion setting in, genuine epic inspiration and truly tragic feeling were alike impossible. The "Sofonisba" of Trissino and the "Rosmunda" of Rucellai were the best tragedies of the period; but although of considerable merit, containing some genuinely lyrical bursts, and occasional flashes of dramatic power, they adhered too closely to the pattern of the ancients, had no real life of their own, and never led to other and better works

But as, public disasters notwithstanding, there was even too much mirth in Italy at that time, comedy fared better than tragedy, although likewise clad in borrowed plumes chiefly plucked from Terence and Plautus. This, the so-called comedy of learning, was widely diffused among literary court circles, and wore an increasing resemblance to the "Commedia dell' Arte." Yet it preserved a physiognomy of its own, and while conferring no little improvement and correction upon the "Comedy of Art," gained from it in exchange a sensible increase of liveliness and spontaneity. Nevertheless the learned comedy was always the production of *literati* and a work of imitation, and so the people continued to prefer the "Comedy of Art," which never entirely lost its primitive stamp even when beginning to be somewhat artificial

There has been much discussion as to the causes precluding the Italy of the Renaissance from founding a genuine national theatre or at least a national comedy at a time when there was so great an abundance of the requisite materials. Certainly the "Commedia dell' Arte" showed no lack of vivacity or fertility of invention, and the "Commedia Erudita" was also replete with an inexhaustible wealth of the same comic spirit abounding in almost every Italian tale and in much of the poetry of the period. On the other hand, many branches of our literature were imitative



CHAPTER X.

General condition of the Italian stage—The miracle plays ("Sacre Rappresentazioni")—The "Comedy of Art" and the "Comedy of Learning"—The comedies of Ariosto—The "Calandria" of Cardinal Bibbiena—The comedies of Machiavelli—The "Mandragola," the "Clizia," the "Comedy in Prose," the "Comedy in Verse," the translation of the "Andria."

S all know, Italy has possessed more than one comic writer and several tragic poets of the highest merit, but has had nothing truly deserving the name of a national stage. During the period when the Romans might have derived original and national comedy from their ancient popular farces and comic and satiric performances, the Mimes and the Atellanæ, they gave their powers to imitations of Greek plays from which neither the genius of Terence nor Plautus availed to emancipate them. Thus a literary theatre arose, having no popular foundation, and the people therefore continued to prefer the Mimes and Atellanæ. These old-world farces, although gradually changing, were still in existence in the Middle Ages, when, being fused into and grafted upon the Miracle Plays, they finally introduced a lay element into the latter and withdrew them from church and cloister. Later they gave birth to the so-called "Commedia dell' Arte," which became increasingly popular, and was already very general among us during the Renaissance. This was almost entirely improvised by the actors who were furnished with nothing but the *scenario*, or subject, general plot, and skeleton framework of the different scenes, indicating the character of the part to be played by each personage, and the salient points of the

Being an easy writer, Terence was enormously copied in Italy; but the influence exercised by Plautus on our stage was by no means slight. Although much rougher, the latter is decidedly superior as a comic writer. With the psychologic insight of an experienced judge of human nature, his representation of character, the power and variety with which he reproduces the countless aspects of town life, and above all his manifest genius for displaying the weaker sides of men's actions and characters, with a daring superiority that turns all things to ridicule, are the distinguishing qualities which made him so popular in Italy. As Mommsen observes, Plautus pulls the strings of his comic plot with great judgment and biting wit; his standpoint is the tavern, which in his plays is always seen to be in antagonism with the home. Terence, on the contrary, plants himself in the house-place, among good people of the better classes; he studies truth to nature, even at the risk of tediousness; he is of a calm and tranquil disposition, and his comedies show a higher conception of woman and of the married state Plautus paints his characters with broad strokes of the brush; while the psychologic analysis of Terence is a genuine miniature. In the former's plays sons are continually turning their fathers into ridicule, and his dialogue is full of quips and conceits; those of the latter have almost educational aims, and his smooth and ornate style has subtlety and elegance of movement His weak side is that of invention, but he supplies the lack of it by art.

Our learned men speedily began to produce both in Italian and Latin, imitations, translations, and paraphrases, of these two comic writers. In Rome, Pomponius Letus was one of the first to give performances of ancient plays by the members of his Roman Academy. The Academy of the *Rozzi* in Sienna quickly followed his lead, and its example was everywhere taken by a great many other associations, such as the *Infiammati*, *Infocati*, *Intronati*, *Immobili*, *Costanti*, &c. But this movement received its first impulse from, and was chiefly centred in Ferrara, under the patronage of the Duke of that State. It was at Ferrara that a translation of the "Menæchmi" of Plautus was performed in public as early as the year 1486. And just as at Ferrara our romantic poetry first assumed its true shape by the fusion of old French romance with learning; so the grafting of Plautus and Terence upon national and popular elements in the same city gave birth to the new comedy initiated by Lodovico Ariosto, before he earned lasting fame by his "Orlando Furioso."

The manner in which this poet successively composed his five comedies is an epitome of the history of the Italian comic stage

in the beginning, and then, owing to their intrinsic vigour and vitality, rose to independence and achieved a genuine national originality of their own. How was it then that our theatre failed to reach the same goal? The truth may be that there is no reason why a nation successful in many things should be equally fortunate in all. To form a national theatre it is requisite for the social and national life to be already formed and developed; and Italy was not yet moulded into a nation when the tide of foreign invasion swept everything aside, suffocated liberty and hastened the general decadence. Besides, the formation of a theatre demands the liberal participation of the public; almost, indeed, the co-operation of the masses, who in this, as in many other branches of composition, prepare the poetic material into which great writers infuse new life. And it should also be remembered that the original, vigorous, and complete development of popular poetry was frequently hindered in Italy by the continual and incessant action that, owing to the slight division of social classes, was exercised by literary upon popular art.

For in this country, before any one species of popular composition attains sufficient maturity to give birth to a new form of national poetry, it already begins to decay and yields the soil to the *literati* pressing forward to cultivate it. The latter know how to profit by every popular element; indeed it has been mainly by aid of this sort that classic imitation in Italy has frequently risen to the height of a genuine renascence. But exactly at the point where the popular element should of right prevail, owing to the need for the origination of a new and national poetic stock, our literature has still greater obstacles to encounter. Nor is it surprising that it should be unable to overcome them when—as was certainly the case with our stage in the sixteenth century—the political conditions of the land are equally hostile.

Such were the reasons why, during the Italian Renaissance, the Sacred Drama became charged with classical reminiscences, literary and conventional forms, before reaching its plenitude of popular vitality; namely, before it could furnish great writers with material for new creations. The "Comedy of Art" had also been polished, modified and altered after the pattern of the "Comedy of Learning." And the latter, without entirely foregoing imitation of Plautus and Terence, was continually straining after the popular element. More than once it seemed on the point of success; an original national comedy appeared to be at last arising; but then imitation quickly regained the upper hand and either the artificial or the plebeian element again prevailed. Thus we never obtained any grasp of the genuine comedy of Aristophanes or Molière.

greater labour. For notwithstanding the marvellous spontaneity and simplicity of his verse, the private and domestic character of Italian comedy can only assume its true shape in the freedom of prose dialogue. Besides, that which chiefly attracts Ariosto's attention and impresses his imagination, that which he places most clearly before us, is the plot, the continual succession of events, the outer presentment of his personages He has neither the desire nor the ability to dedicate much time to the analysis of character or passion. A great variety of episodes, often without any unity, or only such as is derived from perpetual change; a throng of personages, all life-like while present, but disappearing without enacting anything of importance, all this warns us that these plays were preparatory studies for the immortal genius of the creator of "Orlando Furioso." It would seem as though the mighty poem were already stirring in his fancy, already throbbing with vigorous young life and impatient to emerge into the light. It might be said to have granted the poet no peace, to have hurried him onward, and altered the character of the work that he had still on hand.

The "Calandria" of Cardinal Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena, composed in the first decade of the sixteenth century, made a great sensation in the world. It was held by many to have initiated the new style of Italian comedy; but this is not the case, for the "Calandria" had been already preceded by several of Ariosto's comedies, and was decidedly inferior to them. Bibbiena, however, was a Cardinal, a Tuscan, and very facetious; he was no poet, but tried to write in a familiar style to catch the public ear, and succeeded in his intent. People, Pope, cardinals, the weightiest personages of his time alike welcomed his play with laughter and applause. It had a positively enormous success. The author states in the prologue that he does not use verse, "because comedy represents familiar deeds and speech, and because prose can be spoken with free and unfettered words." He also begs his hearers to excuse him if the comedy is not ancient, inasmuch as modern things give greater pleasure; he also excuses himself for not having written it in Latin, on the score that he desires to be understood by all, and the tongue that God and Nature have given us is worthy of no less esteem than Latin, Greek, and Hebrew.[1]

All this proves the magnitude of the change that had now come over the public taste. Yet the "Calandria" is taken from the "Menæchmi" of Plautus, with the sole difference that the male

[1] *Vide* the prologue of the "Calandria" in the "Teatro Italiano antico," vol. i pp. 195–197 Milan, Printing Association of the Italian Classics.

He began by translations from the Latin which are no longer extant, and then applied himself to original plays His "Cassaria," written in 1498, bristles with imitations from Terence; his next work, "I Suppositi," was founded upon the "Captives" and the "Eunuch" fused into one. And the author declares in his prologue that "not only in the fashioning, but even in the arguments of his fables, it is his purpose to imitate the celebrated ancient poets to the utmost extent of his ability." Nevertheless he places the action of the "Suppositi" in Ferrara, at the time of the capture of Otranto by the Turks; makes frequent allusion to contemporary matters, and gives his dialogue an independent vitality of its own. These two comedies, originally written in prose, were afterwards versified by the author. His other plays were also in verse; for in verse Ariosto had a style of his own, simple, natural and original, and naturally felt more at home in his proper element. Nevertheless, this withdrew him from the path marked out for Italian comedy, which was nearly always in prose, on account of the necessary reproduction of familiar dialogue. In his "Lena" both subject and characters are of the sixteenth century. Most original of the five are the two last, the "Negromante" and the "Scolastica." In these we are among the students of Ferrara and Padova, and in the thick of their love affairs. The corruption of Italian society is shown to us unveiled, and the author's satire scourges the manners of the time: the men who paint their faces like women, the needy struggling to appear rich, the rulers of the land with their wolf-like rapacity, the priests that cause scandal of all kinds, and the Popes that traffic in indulgences.

In this way the comedy of learning freed itself from the shackles of the academicans, acquired independence and truth to nature, and came into closer contact with the social life of its time. It was animated by the biting and satiric spirit, the huge simplicity and sensuousness so peculiarly characteristic of the Italian literature of the "Cinquecento," and fostered by study and imitation of Plautus. The comedies of the Renaissance depend almost wholly on their plots, and are often composed by the intermixture of several ancient plays, usually character-pieces. The most admirable quality of Ariosto's plays consists in his vivid portraiture of the times, and his satiric treatment of them. For his satire is little more than a gentle irony, by which he, who is himself an integrant of the age he describes, enjoys his laugh at all things. In these plays we can discern the genius of a great poet, the inaugurator of a new style of composition; but we also realize that he is destined, and already girding himself for a different and

But the writer who, next to Ariosto, deserves the place of honour for having endowed Italian comedy with its true form, is undoubtedly Machiavelli, whose "Mandragola" surpassed all preceding plays. We have already seen by his writings, and especially by his private correspondence, that he was possessed of great comic and satiric power; that he had a strong bent for dramatic composition was also proved as early as 1504, by his attempt to imitate the Clouds of Aristophanes, in the "Maschere," a work that has now perished, and in which he applied the lash to his contemporaries. But all this was not enough to lead any one to suppose him capable of giving us the "Mandragola," which is the finest comedy of the Italian stage; and one that, according to Macaulay, is superior to the best of Goldoni's plays, and only inferior to the greatest of Molière's.

The action of the "Mandragola," apparently suggested by an incident that occurred in Florence, is placed in the year 1504.[1] But the prologue clearly indicates that the play was composed at a much later date, certainly after 1512, and during the dreariest period of Machiavelli's life. Giovio tells us, in his "Elogia doctorum virorum," that Leo X. on hearing of the great success of the "*Mandragola*" in Florence had it performed in Rome by the same actors.[2] And from a letter of Battista della Palla, dated 26th of April, 1520, we see that all was then in readiness for this performance before the Pope.[3] Therefore the comedy had been already played in Florence previously to this date. The oldest printed edition, of which, according to bibliographers, the date is exactly ascertained, must have been published in Rome in the

made very great use of Ruth. And in conclusion, we may quote the two concluding volumes of Mr. J. A. Symonds' excellent work, "The Renaissance in Italy."

[1] In the first scene Callimaco states that he has lived twenty years in Paris, and that at the end of half of that period occurred the entry of Charles VIII. into Italy. As this event took place in 1494, ten years more brings us to the year 1504.

[2] . . . "in Nicia praesertim comoedia, in qua adeo incunde vel in tristibus risum excitavit, ut illi ipsi *ex persona scite expressa, in scaenam inducti* cives, quanquam prææalte commorderentur, totam *inustæ notæ* iniuriam, civili lenitate pertulerint: actamque Florentiæ, ex ea miri leporis fama, Leo pontifex, instauráto ludo, ut Urbi ea voluptas communicaretur, cum toto scenæ cultu, ipsisque histrionibus Romam accivent" ("Elogia doctorum virorum," authore Paulo Jovio, lxxvii. Nicolaus Maccíavellus).

[3] This letter is among the Machiavelli papers, and was published in the "Opere" (P. M.), vol. i. p. lxxxix. Among other matters contained in it, Della Palla writes to Machiavelli from Rome, that he finds the Pope very well disposed towards him, and inclined to give him some commission to write or to do other things This Battista della Palla, now so high in the Pope's favour, is he who afterwards conspired against the Medici.

twins, exactly resembling each other, are replaced by a brother and sister who are also twins, and so precisely alike that on changing clothes, each is easily mistaken for the other. This resemblance, and the foolishness of Calandro, who falls in love with the youth in the belief that he is the girl, serve to create a thousand farcical, comical, and very indecent blunders, marvellously suited to the taste of the time. The fact of its being written by a Cardinal increased its effect; and both the Pope and the Sacred College received it with laughter and applause. But there is nothing new or modern about the "Calandria" excepting its outline, and the vivacity and spontaneousness of the Tuscan dialogue, which, however, is occasionally too diffuse and monotonous. The play hinges almost entirely upon tricks which are ludicrous and obscene rather than really comic. The personages are shadowy, and the incidents never rise to true dramatic or comic power, because everything turns upon the excessive imbecility of Calandro, who can be made to believe anything. In short, it is little more than a farce stuffed with gross and obscene jests. The great vogue it obtained may chiefly be ascribed to the manner in which it was placed upon the stage; and it is easy to understand that the clever actors engaged in its performance were able to make a sixteenth-century audience crack their jaws with laughter over it. The "Calandria" marks the moment when, by treading on the heels of the comedy of art, the comedy of learning and plagiarism had discovered its suitable form in prose dialogue. It is this that gives Cardinal Bibbiena's work a post of historic importance in our literature.[1]

[1] Besides the best-known histories of Italian literature, see A. D'Ancona's "Origini del Teatro in Italia," 3 vols. Florence, Le Monnier, 1872. Herr Ruth's "Geschichte der Italienischen Poesie" (Leipzig, 1847, 2 vols.) is a work of real merit and worthy of perusal, for if seldom quoted, it has often been pillaged. Prof. Karl Hillebrand is one of the few writers who have done justice to this work, and mentions it in his "Etudes historiques et littéraires" (Paris, Franck, 1868), in which he gives a masterly account of the Italian stage. See, too, the diligent work, entitled "L'imitazione classica nella Commedia Italiana del secolo XVI." It is a prize essay, by Dr. Vincenzo de Amicis, published in the "Annali della Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa," vol. ii. Pisa, Nistri, 1873. And several years later appeared the "Studii Drammatici" of Prof. Arturo Graf (Turin, Loescher, 1878). These consist of three essays: on the "Calandria" of Bibbiena, the "Mandragola" of Machiavelli, and the "Candelaio" of Giordano Bruno. Much information is also to be found in Klein's great work: "Geschichte des Dramas," which in vol. iv. (Leipzig, 1866) begins to treat of the Italian stage. But this work is so diffuse and confused, and (putting aside its often extraordinary style) mingles valuable information with so much that is heterogeneous and useless, that it is extremely difficult to gain much assistance from it. Prof. Graf has made good use both of Klein and of Ruth, just as Prof. de Amicis has

ing how ready all are with their mockery and blame, no one strives to accomplish generous deeds which are dispersed by the winds and enveloped in clouds. But should any one seek to cow the author by evil-speaking, I warn you that he, too, knows how to speak evil, and indeed excels in the art; and that he has no respect for any one in Italy, although he bows and scrapes to those better dressed than himself."[1]

Callimaco is a Florentine aged thirty, who has quietly spent twenty years of his life in Paris. Hearing there great praises of the beauty and virtue of the wife of Nicias Calfucci, he comes to Florence on purpose to see her, and immediately falls desperately in love with her. This lady is named Lucrezia, and so good and pure that Callimaco's only hope lies in the foolishness of her husband, and the earnest wish of both to have children born to them. A certain Ligurio, a swindler, who frequents Calfucci's house and to whom Callimaco has promised money, is go-between in this intrigue. The simplicity and credulous witlessness of Messer Nicias, who bears the title of Doctor and has an excellent opinion of himself, are admirably depicted and furnish some of the wittiest scenes of the "Mandragola" Meanwhile Ligurio tries to persuade Messer Nicias to do as physicians advise and take his wife to the Baths. In this way, he thinks, Callimaco will find it easier to know her and enjoy her society. But Messer Nicias resists, for much as he desires to become a father, he considers it a tremendous undertaking to stir from home, and this doctor says one thing and that another, "and they don't know themselves what they mean."

"It vexes you to go away," said Ligurio to him, "because you are not accustomed to lose sight of the cupola of the Duomo." "You're wrong there," quickly answers Messer Nicias; "I was a great wanderer in my youth and never failed to go to the fair at Prato, nor is there a walled place near Florence that I have not visited. And more than that, I've been to Pisa and Leghorn, that I can tell you!" "Oh, Lord! Have you seen the sea? How much bigger is it than the Arno?" "The Arno, indeed! Why, it's four, six, seven times as big. One sees nothing but water, water, water!" At last it is settled that Ligurio is to ask the advice of the doctors while Nicias tries to persuade his wife to make the journey.

In the third and last scene of the first act, Callimaco anxiously inquires of Ligurio what has been decided, and Ligurio replies that the Calfucci will probably go to the Baths, but fears that this will be of no use to the lover. "I am afraid that you are right,"

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p 73.

August of 1524;[1] but it seems undoubted that there are other and still older editions without any date. But there is no evidence that the rumoured performance of Machiavelli's "Mandragola," in the presence of Leo X. at the Oricellarii Gardens, ever took place, and indeed it seems incredible. It was probably confused with the "Rosmunda" of Rucellai.

To us the "Mandragola" has a double importance, for on the one hand it makes us acquainted with Machiavelli's comic power in its highest splendour and originality, and on the other shows from a new point of view and in a different light, his conception of the men and society of the time. He exhibits this society to us as in a photograph, and parades it before our eyes with almost cynical mirth. Nevertheless his reckless gaiety is sometimes interrupted by a sudden burst of tears that is hastily checked, and then—as though ashamed of his emotion—he tries to make us believe that it was almost a burst of laughter. If you would learn, so he says in the prologue, why the author devotes himself to subjects too light for one desirous to be considered a man of gravity and wisdom—

> "Scusatelo con questo, che s'ingegna
> Con questi vani peusieri
> Fare il suo tristo tempo più soave,
> Perchè altrove non ave
> Dove voltare il viso,
> Che gli è stato interciso
> Mostrar con altre imprese altra virtue,
> Non sendo premio alle fatiche sue."[2]

"There is no possible remedy now for our ills We must be satisfied to see every one stand apart, watching, sneering, and slandering. Thus the age strays from the old virtue; for behold-

[1] A copy of this edition exists in St. Mark's Library at Venice, cxxxiii., B 8–48010. It has no date, but is bound up with another comedy, entitled "Aristippia," of precisely the same form, type, paper, division of words, numeration, &c., dated *Rome* 1524 *in the month of August* For this reason Gamba and others have judged the edition of the "Mandragola" to be also of the year 1524. The title runs thus: "Comedia | facetissima | intitolata | Mandragola | et recitata in Firenze." This Roman edition makes us infer the existence of some earlier Florentine one. In fact, the National Library of Florence possesses a copy of another old edition in 8vo among the books of the Magliabecchiana (k. 7. 58) Its sheets 1 and 4 are missing, and a description is given of it in Fossi's catalogue (vol. iii. col. 105), stating that as a lily is to be traced in the water-mark of the paper, it is believed to be of Florentine publication. Brunet attributes it to the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century, and adds: "Elle doit être la première de l'ouvrage". But in no case can it be of the fifteenth century.

[2] "Opere," vol. v. p. 72. These words clearly show that they were written when he was already out of office.

And now Frà Timoteo comes on the stage for the first time, and from one point of view may really be considered the most remarkable character in the piece. He is found in the church, quietly chatting with a maid servant, and the dialogue between them forms, by its incomparable vivacity, spontaneousness, and thoughtless serenity, so strange a contrast with all that is about to take place as to remind the reader of Shakespeare's matchless art.

"If you wish to confess," says the friar, "I am at your service." "Not to-day," replies the woman, "I am in a hurry, and it has done me good to vent myself a little, without going on my knees. Have you recited those masses to our Lady?" "Yes, mistress, I have." "Then here's a florin; and every Monday for two months you are to say a funeral mass for my husband's soul. Good for nothing as he was, yet the flesh is weak; I can't help feeling sorry when I remember him. Do you think he is really in Purgatory?" "No doubt of it." "I can't be so sure of it. You know what he used to do to me sometimes. Oh! how I used to complain of it to you. I pushed him away as much as I could; but he teased me so much. 'Uh! good Lord!" "Fear not, God's mercy is great If man seeks to repent he is always able to do so." "Think you the Turks will come into Italy this year?" "That they will if you don't say your prayers." "Mercy! God save us from all these devilries; I've a mighty dread of those impalers. But I see a woman in church who has got some fennel of mine; I must go and speak to her. Good-day to you." "Good luck to you."[1]

Meanwhile Nicias and Ligurio come in, and the latter instantly tells the friar that they have several hundred florins to give in alms, provided he will help them in a certain business. This business, however, is entirely fictitious, only brought forward to ascertain whether the friar would be ready to serve them for the sake of obtaining the money, and whether he could be depended upon for the real purpose required. In fact, seeing that he is willing to yield, Ligurio cunningly explains the whole thing to him, and obtains the desired promise. The women appear at this point, and the mother is assuring her daughter that she would never try to persuade her to do anything wrong. "But if Frà Timoteo tells you that there is no sin in it, you may be quite at rest." The daughter, however, cannot persuade herself "that it can be right that a man should die by disgracing her." And then the friar comes forward, and makes use of all his dexterity. "I have been consulting the books for more than two hours upon

[1] Act III scene III.

answers Callimaco. "But what am I to do? what plan can I adopt? whither shall I turn? I must needs attempt somewhat, even if it be something great, or dangerous, or harmful, or infamous; it were better to die than live as I am now. Were I able to sleep by night, or to eat, or converse, or take pleasure in anything, I should be more patient and bide my time. But there is no cure for this matter, and if nothing chances to give me a little hope, I cannot fail to die; so, seeing that I must die, I shrink from nothing, but am ready to turn to any brutal, cruel, or atrocious means."

This language gives a very eloquent description of the violence of Callimaco's passion, before he has even spoken with the object of his love. Ligurio then declares that he is struck by a good idea, and proposes that Callimaco should be introduced to Nicias as a doctor. He will tell him more afterwards. And so it is arranged between them.

In the second act Ligurio presents Callimaco to Nicias as a physician, the inventor of a potion that would infallibly enable his wife to bear him a child. Only the first man who approached her after she had drunk it would speedily die. He must therefore allow his wife to see another man at first. The alarm of Nicias on hearing this, his attempts to speak Latin to the sham physician, his delight on hearing the latter reply in Latin quotations which he cannot understand, the ease with which he instantly consents on learning that the King of France and other monarchs have adopted the same expedient, and his continued belief in his own superior cunning, make this act exceedingly comic. But although Messer Nicias is won over, the wife has still to be persuaded; and for this Ligurio suggests that the only mode of attack must be through her confessor, who is a friar. "But who will conquer the confessor?" asks Callimaco. "You and I, gold, our wickedness and theirs," replies the other; and he now suggests speaking to the lady's mother, so that she may induce the confessor to bring the authority of religion to bear upon her daughter and win the latter's consent.

In the third act the mother has been already gained, but on condition that her conscience is not to be burdened. Prudent people, she says, must choose the best of bad alternatives. Meanwhile Nicias has given Ligurio the twenty-five ducats demanded by him to bribe the friar, and they are on their way to the church to carry out that design. "These friars," remarks Ligurio, "are keen-witted and crafty, because they know their own sins as well as ours. He who is unaccustomed to them is deceived by their ways, and does not know how to get round them."

in a crime, in which I have now plunged my arm and the w
of my person, and don't yet know how much farther I shall
to go. Yet I take comfort in this, that when a thing con
many, many must concern themselves with it."[1] After th
goes according to the wishes of Callimaco.

The fifth and last act opens with another soliloquy of
Timoteo, whose anxiety to know what has happened has
him a sleepless night. "I said matins, I read one of the liv
the Holy Fathers, I went into the church and relit a lamp
had gone out, I changed the veil of a miracle-working Madc
How many times have I told those monks to keep her cl
And then they are astonished if people don't pray to her
remember the time when she had five hundred pictures, and
she hasn't twenty. And it is all our fault for not having kn
how to keep up her reputation. We used to recite prayers
make processions, so that there should always be plenty of
pictures. Now we no longer do anything of that kind, and
are surprised that devotion cools. Oh! what poor brains
monks of mine have! But I hear a great noise over ther
Messer Nicias's house!" All the dramatis personæ come in, h
and laughing, to bring Lucrezia to be purified, and the fria
membering the promised alms-offering, recites prayers
bestows his blessing on the company. "Who would no
joyful?" is the last speech of the mother, and the comedy
with a blessing pronounced from the altar upon adultery.

That which strikes us as most extraordinary, howeve
neither the spectacle of a thoroughly corrupt society, nor
absence of any truly honest or virtuous character; but rathe
appalling absence of conscience in all the characters, their hor
freedom from moral responsibility, and the manner in which
pass from good to evil without seeming to be aware of any cha
Callimaco has fallen in love with Lucrezia before having
her, and merely from hearing praises of her beauty and vir
his passion quickly becomes uncontrollable, nor has it any
than a sensual aim. It makes life unbearable to him, and
ready to recur to "any means, however brutal, cruel or atroci
Scruples and fear of hell disturb him at one moment; but
reflecting how many worthy men have gone to perdition
thinks that he too should have the courage to face et
punishment. The only virtuous character in the piece is
young wife, poor Lucrezia, a negative being, without any w
her own, and entirely at the mercy of the falsehood and ca
of the rest. When mother, husband, and all the others urg

[1] Act iv. scene vi

this matter, and, after much examination, I find many points in our favour, both in general and in particular. As to your conscience, you must cling to these generalities, that where there is the alternative of a certain good or an uncertain evil, we must never lose the good for fear of the evil. Here there is the certain good, that you will have a son and gain a soul for the Lord God. . . . It is the will and not the body that commits sin, and sin would consist in offending your husband, whereas you will do him a kindness; it would be sin to do this deed with pleasure, but you dislike performing it. Besides this, in all things we must look to the end. Your end is to fill a seat in Paradise, and make your husband happy."[1] And he continues in this strain, even reminding the woman how the Bible says that Lot's daughters committed no sin because their intentions were good, and concludes by saying that it is a question of a venial offence that can be cleansed with holy water. "To what do you urge me, father?" here exclaims poor Lucrezia; and all bewildered, she promises to do as she is bid; but adds that she fears she shall never survive her grief and shame.

The fourth act is opened by Callimaco, who is suffering agonies of suspense. He hopes one moment, despairs the next. "You are mad," he says to himself; "you know that disillusion and repentance must follow, even if you gain your intent! But what is the worst that can befall you? To die and go to hell. Yet since so many worthy men have died and gone to hell, why should you be ashamed to go there yourself? Look your fate in the face! Fly from evil, or, if you cannot fly from it, bear it like a man! Don't succumb, don't abase yourself like a woman. But I cannot fix my mind upon this idea," "because I am so consumed by love for that woman, that I feel all shaken from my head to the soles of my feet; my legs tremble, my entrails stir, my heart leaps from my bosom, my arms give way, my tongue is mute, my eyes are dazzled, my brain whirls."[2]

Ligurio again appears, and the plot that has been hatched draws rapidly to its close. Frà Timoteo has donned a disguise and become an active and powerful ally in the infamous cause, although behaving throughout with the easiest good humour. "For they speak truth who say that bad company brings men to the gallows. One goes wrong just as often through being too yielding and too good, as through being too wicked. The Lord knows I never meant to do harm to any one. I stayed in my cell; I said my prayers, I conversed with my penitents, and then came to me this devil of a Ligurio, who made me stain my finger

[1] Act iii. scene xi. [2] Act iv. scene i.

of Italian corruption, and we are now shown a graphic representation of the manner in which religion, having sunk into a purely mechanical conventionality, can find sophistries to justify evil as easily as good, and thus make conscience a blank. It would seem from this play that men may commit evil unawares and without being wicked. The acts accomplished by them are no longer acts of their own. They would seem to be dictated and led by some outer force, now a passion, now an instinct, now a habit, now a prejudice, but never by anything worthy of the name of conscience. Therefore no remedy can be had but from some other exterior force. Steel is the only cure. Such was always Machiavelli's ruling idea, and whenever he expounds it, his spirit is fired, his diction gains precision, elegance, and captivating strength, he is as one inspired and lifted above himself. This idea was the main theme of the "Prince," and a distant flash of it is visible in the "Mandragola." Accordingly, in both these works the style and language of the author attain so high a standard as to convert them into the two finest literary masterpieces of Italian prose. Machiavelli undoubtedly stands first among our writers of prose. His every word expresses an idea, without useless ornament, without artifice, without effort of any sort. Men, events, inanimate things even, seem to have a language of their own and directly addressed to the reader. His writings teem with the admirable wit that springs from the lips of the people of Florence, and he occasionally reproduces with singular vigour even their somewhat ungrammatical idioms. He only employs his Latin scholarship so far as is strictly necessary to give force and dignity to his style. Even in his other works his classical learning is seldom allowed to be too preponderant, and certainly in his "Mandragola" the treasures of the spoken tongue are freely lavished in all their freshness, fragrance, and inexhaustible variety of colour and sound. Without ever stooping to vulgarity, he is always natural and spontaneous, and always elegant, without ever resorting to artifice.

Macaulay, whose literary judgments have an undoubted weight, had an almost limitless admiration for the "Mandragola." He considers it a proof that had Machiavelli devoted himself to the drama, he would have attained to the highest eminence, and would have produced a salutary effect upon the national literature and taste. "This," he says, "we infer, not so much from the degree, as from the kind of his excellence." . . . "By the correct and vigorous delineation of human nature it produces interest without a pleasing or skilful plot, and laughter without the least ambition of wit."[1] He considers Nicias to be the most original character in

[1] Macaulay's "Essays," vol i p. 86.

to adultery in order that she may bear a child, she shudders and resists; but then being taken to church and into the presence of her confessor, she is easily persuaded by him that there can be no sin "in filling a seat in Paradise." So she not only ends by resigning herself, but determines to enjoy her life gaily in the abyss of immorality into which she has been plunged. The clearest expression and most perfect personification of this state of things is found in Frà Timoteo. He says his prayers and recites mass, attends devoutly to the holy images and to confession; but when some charity money is offered him in consideration of his doing a deed of infamy, he is not in the least revolted. He reflects that there will be more masses to say, more candles to light; he studies the sacred writings, and, on finding a sophism adapted to the case, consents to promote an act of adultery; to persuade the unlucky Lucrezia that evil is good, and that by her own dishonour she will commit an action pleasing to the Almighty. It is true that he makes the passing reflection that bad company leads the best of men into evil; but the plunge is already taken and he is consoled by remembering that it is every one's interest to keep the crime concealed. He dusts the images, reads the lives of the saints, deplores the scanty piety of the times, and all the while is overcome by an intense desire to know if the sin prepared and made possible by his assistance has succeeded *ad votum*. He then pronounces a blessing upon all concerned from the altar.

Does not this comedy call up before us, as though evoked from our conscience, the tragic figure of the "Prince," rushing through the streets, brandishing a blood-stained sword and by force, fraud, and violence compelling his subjects to unite in order to build up a State, and create a fatherland? And then, teaching them discipline with the "Art of War," does he not lead them against the enemy, inciting them, not by Christian but by Pagan maxims, and the example of ancient Rome, to pour out their blood in defence of this State, this fatherland, and at last, through danger and misfortune, to learn to be men? Can we not hear the thunder of Martin Luther's mighty voice proclaiming the existence of conscience, its sacredness and inviolability, and thus driving even the Catholics to repentance and self-correction?

It has been well said that the "Mandragola" is the comedy of a society of which the "Prince" is the tragedy. The latter seeks to cure at the sword's point the evils which the former paints with a jest, but the jest equally indicates their hidden source. Accordingly it begins and ends within the walls of a church. Already the "Discourses" had bidden us seek in the Church for the germ

laughingly asks her confessor's help to compass the dishonour of her own daughter; or of the daughter who is virtuous, and yet ends by jesting over the wreck of her own virtue? Now and then, indeed, the author sighs, as it were, against his will, and deplores the times in which he has been born and to which he belongs; but these laments only prove that there is one side of human nature that he has forgotten to take into account. For the description he gives us of it in the "Mandragola," vigorous and original as it is, has not always the exactitude claimed for it by Macaulay. The investigation of social corruption studied apart from all else, enquiry into its causes and remedies, may often be useful as a prelude to, or for the creation of a science. But art, on the contrary, demands living realities, and is crushed by the practice of vivisection. For art requires that in whatever depth of crime or corruption the cry of conscience should still be audible, even if only from afar, since conscience can never be utterly extinguished, until human nature itself shall have ceased to exist. The transition from good to evil, even in the lightest and most deceptive form, can never be effected without moral suffering, and can never move us to careless mirth.

In a burst of genuine inspiration, Machiavelli was able to overcome the many difficulties in his way, and to rise superior to himself His frequently happy power of dramatic representation, his freshness of style and depth of thought enabled him to compose a marvellous, if not faultless work. But when he again tried to explore this new vein, he could find no ore of the same quality. His attempts, more than once vainly repeated, proved that he was not born to be a true dramatic poet, although he had produced one excellent comedy. His ruling idea, in the shape in which it always appeared to him, was only fertile in political and historical science, and in that field alone unceasingly fruitful of novel food for thought. Throughout the sixteenth century the Italian stage persistently followed the road it had begun to take even before Machiavelli's attempts, and had to pay the penalty of its sins Possessed of inexhaustible fancy and comic force, with a really prodigious wealth, spontaneity and elegance of language and style, with an unrivalled liveliness of dialogue, Italy produced an infinite number of comedies, without achieving the creation of a really national comic stage,[1] such as, without preaching morality, is yet fitted for the improvement of mankind.

The "Clizia," performed in Florence in 1525,[2] was undoubtedly

[1] Besides the authors mentioned above, Herr Theodor Mundt also makes some just remarks upon "La Mandragola" at paragraph xiv. ("Die Mandragola oder Komodie und Kirche") of his work upon Machiavelli quoted by us elsewhere.

[2] As we shall presently see, Vasari speaks of this performance in his "Vite dei Pittori," and Nerli mentions it in one of his letters.

the whole comedy, and declares it to be beyond all praise.[1] Certainly this presumptuous simpleton, entirely unaware of his own foolishness, and the laughing-stock of all, is the truest and most ingenuous personage of a world wherein every one, including those most bound to have some conscience, are utterly devoid of any. The laughter aroused by Nicias, the comic situations he is always bringing about, are not spoilt for us by any extraneous consideration. In his way, therefore, he is perfect; his acquaintance is an artistic pleasure, unmarred by moral pain.

Nevertheless the "Mandragola" has a serious side that entirely escaped Macaulay's notice, just as he failed to discover its weakest point. On examining the fundamental unity of the play, and its leading idea, we see that Frà Timoteo is the character upon which our principal attention is fixed. In him we have pure comedy united to deep and murderous satire on Italian society, and this helps to enlarge our appreciation of the lofty genius that created this very singular character. Nevertheless we cannot often laugh heartily at Frà Timoteo. Dominated by graver thoughts, our imagination can neither have free vent, nor give itself up to purely æsthetic contemplation. The author endeavours to show us the comic side alone of the society before his eyes; but, in his mind, comedy necessarily led to satire, and whenever this change takes place we have to guess at his highest and deepest ideas because they are left in an abstract and uncertain shape. He has no longer the power to dress them in poetic or comic garb, and yet seeks to laugh at what cannot move us to laughter. Hence the atmosphere of true comedy rapidly disappears, and the characters lose their real and concrete physiognomy.

Some critics have declared Frà Timoteo to be a good monk, and that the author only intended to make him an example of the consequences of a false religion. But it remains to be proved that men can be good while assisting in the accomplishment of abominable actions, even when crowning them with the benediction of the Church. It is true that religion having once become corrupt and perverted into empty formalism, may be the source of great evil. But it is not true that men may pass from good to evil with the calm serenity of mind displayed by Frà Timoteo in the "Mandragola." And what can be said of a mother who

[1] "But old Nicias is the glory of the piece. We cannot call to mind anything that resembles him. The follies which Molière ridicules are those of affectation, not those of fatuity. Coxcombs and pedants, not absolute simpletons are his game. Shakespeare has indeed a vast assortment of fools; but the precise species of which we speak is not, if we remember right, to be found there. . . . Cloten is an arrogant fool, Ostric a foppish fool, Ajax a savage fool; but Nicias is, as Thersites says of Patroclus, a positive fool" (Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i. p. 87).

after his affairs, held intercourse with the magistrates, was regular in all things. But ever since he has had a fancy for this girl, his business is neglected, his farms go badly, his trade is ruined. He is always angry without knowing why; he fidgets in and out of the house a thousand times a day, and does not know what he is doing." The diction of this act is very animated and full of Florentine phrases. It concludes with a dialogue between the servant and the bailiff, excellently imitated from that composing the first act of Plautus's comedy.

In the third act of "Clizia," Cleandro laments that his own father should be his rival in love. There is no real fun in this situation, nor has it any element of tragedy. Here, as in the "Casina," the wife at last agrees with her husband to leave everything to chance, which decides in favour of Pirro, according to Nicomaco's wish. The latter now feels assured of success, but has counted his chickens before they are hatched. He joyfully settles with his docile and cringing servant how the marriage is to be arranged, and in which house he is first to meet the bride alone. His wife, however, keeps strict watch over him, will not leave him an instant, and contrives matters in such a way that poor Nicomaco finds himself alone, not with Clizia, but with a servant lad in disguise. The manner in which the old husband is drawn into the trap and made a general laughing-stock, is really comic, and shows perhaps even more originality than is found in Plautus[1] Throughout the greater part of this act Machiavelli closely follows, or indeed translates from, the "Casina."[2] But the latter shows far greater truth to nature; for here the maiden is betrothed to a slave, not, as in Clizia, to a free man, and her blind and absolute submission is therefore more probable and tolerable in the ancient than in the modern play. In the fifth act the wife, thanks to the plot she has contrived, obtains her end, and the humiliated husband at last makes his peace with her. A gentleman just arrived from Naples is discovered to be Clizia's father, and her marriage with Cleandro is celebrated. This last incident is only announced in the comedy of Plautus, where indeed neither the maiden nor Cleandro appears upon the stage. Machiavelli follows this example as regards the girl. Plautus,

[1] Macaulay holds the same opinion. "The relation of the trick put upon the doting old lover is exquisitely humorous. It is far superior to the corresponding passage in the Latin comedy, and scarcely yields to the accounts which Falstaff gives of his ducking" (Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i. p. 88).

[2] In fact, the fourth scene of this fourth act is an almost literal translation from the second scene of act III. of the "Casina," and so, too, the sixth from the fourth, and the seventh from the fifth. Even the soliloquy in scene VIII. of act IV. of the "Clizia" is imitated from the first scene of act IV. of the "Casina."

written after the "Mandragola," since in the third scene of the second act there is an allusion to the latter play. The action of the piece is dated 1506,[1] that is two years after that of the "Mandragola." It is of very inferior merit, being no more than a simple imitation of the "Casina" of Plautus, which, as all know, was itself a copy from the Greek. Sometimes Machiavelli follows his original so closely as to give a literal translation; at others, where his imitation is less servile, he writes with far greater vivacity. But throughout the piece, not only is his comic power very inferior to that of the great Latin playwright he wishes to emulate, but he has weakened its best portions by a superfluity of sententious reflections and remarks.

The prologue begins by reiterating in grave, pompous prose the idea so frequently enunciated in the author's political works; namely, that as mankind is always the same, so that which once occurred in Athens has now happened even in Florence. He has fixed his choice on the Florentine incident, because nowadays Greek is no longer spoken; and thus he easily converts the ancient into a modern play.

Cleandro and his aged father, Nicomaco, are both in love with the maiden Clizia, who has been reared like a daughter of the house. Nicomaco wishes to make her the wife of his serving-man, Pirro and Cleandro, with an equally bad motive, tries to defeat his father's scheme, proposing to give her in marriage to his bailiff, Eustachio, and is assisted in this by his mother, who is aware of all that is going on. This situation, chiefly represented in a narrative form, occupies the first act, which Plautus, on the contrary, had cast in the shape of a very brilliant and laughable dialogue between the servant and the bailiff. And Machiavelli, not satisfied with narrating instead of representing his incidents, also assigns a lengthy monologue to Cleandro, who after comparing the life of a lover with that of a soldier, indulges in a series of general reflections better suited to a political or historical dissertation. The second act is much more lively. The wife quarrels with her husband because she desires to marry the girl to the bailiff, "who knows how to attend to his business, has a capital and would live upon plain water, whereas the servant, Pirro, passes his life in taverns and at gambling tables, and would die of hunger in Altopascio." Then, remaining alone on the stage, she gives a most vivid description of the change that has come over her husband, and thus affords us a graphic picture of the life of Florentine burghers at that period. "He went to mass, looked

[1] In the first scene of act i. Cleandro says: "When twelve years ago, in 1494," &c. "Opere," vol. v. p. 139.

Strozzi Codex in the Florence National Library comprises an autograph copy of the play. But this external proof loses value when we remember that the same collection of manuscripts contains a "Descrizione della peste," also in Machiavelli's handwriting, which no one at the present day attributes to his authorship. Then, too, at the end of the comedy is the inscription, also in his hand: "*Ego Barlachia recensui*,"[1] supporting the theory of his having copied the writings of these authors in this codex, a theory we shall find additionally confirmed further on. And if we turn from external to internal evidence, it would be very difficult to assign this "Comedy in Verse" to Machiavelli. Hinging entirely on a confusion of the two names of Camillo and Catillo, it represents an incident of ancient Roman life. It has no plot, no charm of style, its characters are lacking in life and spontaneity, and it is excessively tedious reading. Crammed with perpetual monologues, it has none of those witty Florentine quips and turns of speech, which are never wanting to the plays and poems of Machiavelli. Even looking through it at random, it would be hard to credit him with verses such as those of the monologue beginning thus:

> "Oh! che disgrazia, oh! che infelicità
> E quella di chi vive in gelosia!
> Oh! quanti savi tener pazzi fa,
> Ma de' pazzi giammai savi non fè
> Non si mangia un boccon mai che buon sia;
> Usasi sempre solo. Adunque egli è
> Piacer da mille forche. E spesse volte
> Stassi desto la notte a udir quel dice
> Sua donna, perchè già n'è sute colte;
> Che c'è chi in sogno i fatti suoi ridice."[2]

[1] Polidori mentions that this Barlacchia or Barlacchi was a public crier in Florence, and supposes that Machiavelli assumed his name almost as an announcement that in his comedies he acted as a public crier of the vices of his fellow citizens. *Vide* the above-quoted preface to "Le Opere Minori" del Machiavelli, p. xiii; the note at the end of the play p. 586, and the description of the Strozzi Codex, at p. 415, of the same volume. Professor Hillebrand, on the contrary, holds that the word *recensui* is here used in the meaning of *rividi*, and therefore proves nothing. Barlacchia, he thinks, here only stands for simpleton, such in fact being the colloquial meaning of the term *barlacchio* or *barbalucchio*, and was adopted as a *nom de plume* by Machiavelli in a passing caprice. (Hillebrand, "Études," &c., p. 352, note 1.) This, however, is a simple hypothesis. It seems to us that the comedy is absolutely unworthy of Machiavelli, as indeed Professor Hillebrand also agrees. We may note in conclusion that Vasari, when describing the festivities and performances got up by the *Compagnia della Cazzuola* in Florence, mentions Barlacchi as one of the pleasant men of that time, and says that he took an active part in those festivities. "Vite," &c., vol xii p. 16

[2] Act i. scene v.

however, understood that there was nothing really comic in the spectacle of love-rivalry between a father and son; Machiavelli refused to follow him in this particular, and his work has suffered in consequence.

The "Prose Comedy," a very short work in three acts, rather resembles the so-called proverbs of the present day. The subject seems to have been taken from an incident that made much sensation in the more dissipated stratum of Florentine society. A servant girl receives the confidences of her old master, Amerigo, who has fallen in love with his gossip, the wife of Alfonso, and of Friar Alberigo, who is enamoured of her young mistress, Caterina. The latter, after hearing of her husband's avowal, tells the maid that she has lost patience and means to find a lover for herself, whereupon the maid speaks to her of the enamoured friar, and easily overcomes her objections to him. No sooner is the friar sure of his footing than he sets to work to upset the intrigue between Amerigo and his gossip, with whose husband he is acquainted. Amerigo's wife comes to Alfonso's house, and after meeting the friar there, waits to see her own husband, who enters expecting to be received by his gossip. There is a noisy scene, in which Amerigo is mocked and flouted. In the midst of it the friar appears, as if by chance, and immediately tries to reconcile the husband and wife, who, after another burst of indecent abuse, come to terms with each other, and by choosing the friar for their confessor, leave him master of the situation.

In this work Machiavelli's language is even grosser than usual, narrative supplies the place of action, and there is no true development of character. Nevertheless, there is plenty of the usual brilliant dialogue.[1]

We must now say a few words of two other plays, the "Comedy in Verse," and the "Andria," which is a translation from Terence. The authenticity of the former work has been disputed by many writers, although it is regarded by some as a production of Machiavelli's youth. There is one very remarkable circumstance that might indeed incline us to believe it his; namely, that the famous

[1] Polidori places this comedy among the works unjustly attributed to Machiavelli, although he allows that there is no internal evidence "to prevent its being attributed to the Florentine playwright." But he regards it as an imitation of the "Mandragola," and for this sole reason will not believe it to have been written by Machiavelli. ("Prefazione," already quoted, p. xv.) There is certainly some resemblance between the two plays, but no trace of imitation or *derivation* by another hand, as Polidori asserts but does not prove. It may be said that the author repeats himself, but that would merely show the scanty fertility of his comic vein. In fact, after the "Mandragola," as we have already said, he produced nothing more of any true originality in his capacity of comic poet.

Machiavelli[1] And this assertion, although contradicted by others, has been abundantly confirmed by Ricci, who, in the enumeration he gives of his grandfather's works in his "Priorista," plainly declares that Machiavelli also composed another play, "entitled 'La Sporta,' founded on the idea of the 'Aulularia' of Plautus, and that some fragments of it, once possessed by Bernardino di Giordano, having fallen into the hands of Giovan Battista Gelli, the latter, after making some trifling additions, gave it to the world as his own work."[2] Gelli, on the other hand, in his dedicatory epistle says that he took his subject from real life; acknowledges in the prologue that he has designedly imitated Plautus and Terence, and in scene iv. of act iii. refers to "La Mandragola" and "La Clizia," without adding any comment. However, it is an acknowledged fact that he not only studied Machiavelli a great deal, but also copied him. The theme of "Circe," Gelli's best work, is to be found in the "Asino d'oro" of Machiavelli, who had borrowed it from the ancients; and his second comedy, entitled "L'Errore," was at least in part, as he implicitly allows, imitated from "La Clizia."[3] "La Sporta," however, is far better, and on reading it attentively we can sometimes trace the hand of the Florentine Secretary in the greater truthfulness and vivacity of the dialogue, and in certain monologues containing some of his well-known touches of reflection. We believe that it was Gelli who greatly complicated the plot of the piece, by the introduction of episodes and secondary personages, such as Machiavelli always

certain, says Darus, that Cremetas will not give thee his daughter, and thus thou canst continue thy practices: *nec tu ea causa minueris—Hæc que facis.* Machiavelli's rendering is . *Neither for this cause must thou abstain from doing that which thou dost*, which is not nearly so clear as Cesari's version: *it will not be necessary for you to change your way of life.* Then the servant adds, that as to saying that no other bride will be found, because no one would bestow a wife on one in thy condition, that could be easily contradicted, because thy father would rather give thee a pauper bride than allow thee to continue in a course so opposed to morality. *Nam quod tu speras propulsabo facile: uxorem his moribus—Dabit nemo. Inopem inveniet potius quam te corrumpi sinat.* Machiavelli translates: *It is easy to confute that which thou fearest, for no one would give a wife to such conduct: he would rather bestow her on a pauper.* Here there is both inexactitude and obscurity. It is not easy to understand the meaning of *dar moglie a cotesti costumi.* The other words are no rendering of the original Cesari gives this translation: "*As regards the hope you express by saying: 'No one would give a wife to one like myself,' I can cast it down with a breath. Your father would find you one without a dowry, rather than let you go to the bad in this way.*" This rendering is affected, but is far clearer and more exact than that of Machiavelli

[1] Moreni, "Annali della tipografia del Torrentino," p 19 (Florence, Francesco Daddi, 1819), and so also two other writers

[2] Quartiere S Spirito, at sheets 160*t*

[3] "The plot of the play turns on a similar incident to that of Machiavelli's 'Clizia'" (Prologue to "L'Errore").

It runs on in this way for sixty verses. Another monologue begins thus:

> "Oh! che miseria è quella degli amanti,
> Ma molto più di quelli
> Ch' hanno i lor modi strani a sofferire!
> Io, per me, innanzi vuo' prima morire,
> Che seguir tai cervelli." [1]

And it continues in the same style throughout fifty-six more verses. The entire comedy is full of stuff of this kind, and worse. Even Polidori, who has published it among the works of Machiavelli, is very doubtful of its authenticity. Hillebrand, although accepting it as authentic, and discovering occasional beauties here and there, also allows it to be unworthy of the author of "La Mandragola." Macaulay, however, denies that it can be genuine, asserting that neither its merits nor defects bear any resemblance to those of Machiavelli.[2] And in this opinion we fully concur.

"Andria" is only a translation of Terence's comedy of the same name. Comparison with the original shows certain points where the Latin phraseology has not been faithfully rendered, and others in which the Italian version is still obscure and clumsy, thereby leading us to the conclusion that it was never revised. In general, however, it is not only faithful to the original, but has a far greater amount of freshness and spontaneity than can be found in more modern translations.[3]

These are the plays of the Florentine Secretary. But we should not forget to mention how it has frequently been asserted that "La Sporta," the better of the two comedies by Giovan Battista Gelli, was written from rough sketches on the same theme left by

[1] Act ii. scene v.

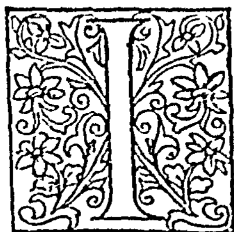
[2] "The latter we can scarcely believe to be genuine. Neither its merits nor its defects remind us of the reputed author" (Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i. p. 88).

[3] Here are a few examples. In scene v. of act i., Pamphilus, in speaking of Cremetas, who after at first refusing, is now willing to grant him his daughter, becomes suspicious and says: *Aliquid monstri alunt.* Machiavelli translates this literally: "*They nourish some monster,*" which only makes nonsense. Cesari gives the far better rendering: "*There must be some devilry in this.*" Further on, in speaking of Miside, who *laborat e dolore*, where it is meant that she is suffering the pains of labour, Machiavelli simply translates: *she is dying of pain.* In scene iii. of act ii., the servant Darus advises Pamphilus to pretend to his friends that he still desires the maiden, although he has ceased to care for her, because only by this device can he lull their suspicions and be enabled to continue his evil practices, and preserve his liberty. If, on the other hand, he were to declare that he no longer wanted the girl, his friends would try to turn him from his bad ways by seeking him another bride, and would certainly find one, notwithstanding his poverty, as they would look for one without any dower. It is



CHAPTER XI.

The "Golden Ass"—"The Capitoli" and other minor poems—"Dialogue on Language"—"Description of the Plague"—"Dialogue on Anger and the methods of its cure"—"The tale of the Archfiend Belphagor"—Other minor writings.

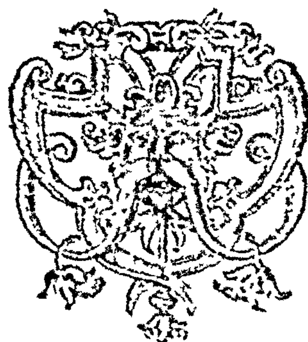


IT was mainly during these years that Machiavelli employed his leisure hours in writing several minor works in verse and prose, of which it is now time to speak. As to the few poems he produced, his verses are easy, often satirical and pungently vivacious, but they have too much resemblance to prose Energetic expressions, profound and well-directed thoughts may frequently be found in them ; but they are always philosophic maxims and considerations reminding us of the "Prince" and the "Discourses," without force of imagery, originality of exposition, or any quality, in short, that is essential to genuine poetry. Nevertheless, these verses often enable us to understand their author's mental condition, and thereby assist us to a clearer conception of the history of his intellect.

The "Golden Ass" is the commencement of a poem in *terza rima*, upon which the author was engaged in 1517, as is shown by a letter addressed by him to Lodovico Alamanni [1] in the same year, proving that he considered this to be a work of much importance. Yet, after writing eight very short chapters, he laid it aside, having lost all impulse or desire to continue a narrative devoid of plot, or passion, and without charm. The title is borrowed from

[1] "Opere," vol. vii. letter xlvi. p. 152.

took care to avoid. Probably the latter had only sketched the general framework, and begun to colour the scenes and dialogues here and there in his incomparably vivacious manner. This, however, is mere hypothesis, and his rough sketch being lost, it can never be ascertained what was his exact share in the composition of "La Sporta." In any case this could neither greatly add to, nor detract from his fame as a comic author, for that must always mainly depend upon "La Mandragola," the only play proving him to have possessed any real dramatic genius. For this work was the birth of a fit of happy inspiration, of true poetic creativeness, never again to be repeated in his life.



"La virtù fa le region tranquille;
E da tranquillità poi ne risolta
L'ozio, e l'ozio arde i paesi e le ville.
Poi, quando una provincia è stata involta
Ne' disordini un tempo, tornar suole
Virtute ad abitarvi un' altra volta
Quest'ordine così permette e vuole
Chi ci governa, acciò che nulla stia
O possa star mai fermo sotto 'l sole."

So it has been and will always be. Good follows evil and *vice versa*; the one is the cause of the other. Those are much deceived who think to escape such vicissitudes by force of prayer and fasting.

"Creder che senza te, per te contrasti
Dio, standoti ozioso e ginocchioni,
Ha molti regni e molti Stati guasti."

Prayer is quite necessary to the people, and he who forbade it would be mad:

"Ma non sia alcun di si poco cervello,
Che creda, se la sua casa ruina,
Che Dio la salvi senz 'altro puntello;
Perchè e' morrà sotto quella ruina."[1]

This, as all may perceive, is not poetry, but rather paragraphs of the "Discourses" put into verse. There is less philosophy in the three concluding chapters. The beautiful maiden takes the poet to see the animals, and he first gives us a catalogue of them, and then pauses to converse with a fat hog, asking him if he wishes to be again a man. He receives in reply the well-known eulogy on the condition of beasts who are free from all cares and worries, and the hog does his best to prove that in every respect the lot of animals is preferable to that of mankind.[2]

According to Busini, the allusions in the "Golden Ass" are aimed at Luigi Guicciardini and the adherents of the Medici, but he can tell us nothing in support of this theory.[3] It is true that Machiavelli himself declares that among the animals brought before him he found old acquaintances whom he had once

[1] "Asino d'oro," chap. v.

[2] Both La Fontaine in his fable, "Les Compagnons d'Ulysse" (xii. 1), and Fénélon in his dialogue, "Ulysse et Gryllus," have also borrowed from Plutarch, incited perhaps by the example of Machiavelli and Gelli. In La Fontaine, a wolf, a lion, and a bear take the place of the hog. In Fénélon, as in Machiavelli and Plutarch, it is the hog that refuses to become a man.

[3] Busini, "Lettere," p. 243.

Apuleius and Lucian, the theme from Plutarch's dialogue, "The Grasshopper," from which Gelli also derived his "Circe." Here and there, too, we perceive a certain tendency to imitate the "Divina Commedia," but the substance of it is, or is intended to be, a satire on the Florentines of Machiavelli's own day. The poet tells us that after having long renounced stabbing this man and that in his writings, he has had a sudden return of his old passion, specially moved thereunto because the times afforded so large a field for satire. Entering a wild forest, he is met, not by Dante's three wild beasts, but by one of Circe's damsels, surrounded by her herd, consisting of men transformed into animals. He is conducted by her to a palace, and warned that he also will be changed into a beast. Meanwhile he sups with his companion, and gives the following minute, if neither artistic nor elegant description of her charms :

> "Avea la testa una grazia attrattiva
> Tal ch 'io non so a chi me la somigli,
> Perchè l'occhio al guardarla si smarriva.
> Sottili, arcati e neri erano i cigli ;
> Perchè a plasmargli fur tutti gli Dei,
> Tutti e' celesti e superni consigli." [1]

Then, being left alone, he immediately, like a philosopher, begins to ponder the reasons :

> "Del variar delle mondane cose,"

and proceeds to enounce his well-known considerations. That which causes the great to fall from the summit of their power is their unceasing greed for dominion. Venice began to decline from the moment that she tried to extend her territory on the mainland. Sparta and Athens began to lose strength when they had vanquished their neighbours. The commonwealths of Germany, on the contrary, with no more than six miles of territory, are free and at peace. Florence, with her boundaries close to her walls, could defy the Emperor Henry IV., but at the present day quails before every one. It is certain that a government is far more durable when it has good laws and pure manners ; but even then we cannot be assured of lasting tranquility, because change is inevitable in human events.

[1] "Opere," vol. v. "Asino d'oro," chap. iv. p. 397.

allusions to the author's misfortunes. Torn by the fangs of others' envy, so Machiavelli begins, my unhappiness would be greatly increased were not the Muses responsive to the strings of my lyre. I know that I am no true poet, yet still hope to glean a few laurel branches in the path that is bestrewn with them :

> "Cantando dunque, cerco dal cuor torre,
> E frenar quel dolor de' casi adversi,
> Cui dietro il pensier mio furioso corre ;
> E come del servir gli anni sien persi
> Come in fra rena si semini ed acque,
> Sarà or la materia de' miei versi."

When the stars were vexed by the glory of mankind, Ingratitude, the daughter of Avarice and Suspicion, was born, and has her chief abode in courts and in the hearts of princes. She deals her wounds with three poisoned darts : by leaving benefits unrecompensed, by forgetting them altogether, and lastly by positively insulting her benefactors.

> "Questo colpo trapassa dentro all' ossa,
> Questa terza ferita è più mortale,
> Questa saetta vien con maggior possa."

He then adds that under popular government, Ingratitude is all the greater in proportion with its ignorance ; consequently worthy citizens are always badly remunerated by it, and sometimes driven to meditate the establishment of tyranny. He refers to Greek and Roman history, Aristides, Scipio, and Cæsar, before touching upon his own times, in which he finds princes to be even more ungrateful than the masses, and instances the great Captain Consalvo who has earned his sovereign's distrust in reward for his defeat of the French—*in premio delle galliche sconfitte.*

This allusion proves the "Capitolo" to have been written no later than 1515. And Machiavelli then concludes, almost in self-admonishment :

> "Dunque non sendo Ingratitudin morta,
> Ciascun fuggir le Corti e Stati debbe ;
> Che non c'è via che guidi l'uom più corta
> A pianger quel ch'e' volle, poi che l'ebbe "[1]

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[1] "Opere," vol. v. pp. 427–432.

regarded as so many Fabiuses and Catoes, but had afterwards recognized by their deeds to be mere sheep and lambs, and that on this account he wished to attack them. But the poem was broken off before the transformation of the hero into a donkey, just at the point where the allusions would have become more transparent; accordingly, if Busini and his contemporaries failed to interpret their meaning, it is hopelessly impossible for us to succeed at the present date.

Other minor poems now follow in the "Opere"; first the short "Capitolo dell' Occasione,"[1] addressed to Filippo dei Nerli, formerly thought to be imitated from a Greek epigram in the "Anthologia Planudea," but which is instead almost a literal rendering of the version of the same by Ausonias in epigram xii.[2] Of greater length is the "Capitolo di Fortuna," addressed to Giovan Battista Soderini. With much clearness, spontaneity, and some felicitous imagery, Machiavelli once more preaches his ideas upon Fortune. The only happy man is he that can attach himself to the wheels upon which Fortune turns; but as their movement is perpetually changing, even this is not enough. Hence we ought to be ready to leap from wheel to wheel, but the hidden virtue that rules us will not allow us to do so: we cannot change our person, neither can we our nature. Often, accordingly, the higher we have mounted, the lower do we fall, and it is then that Fortune shows the extent of her power:

> "Avresti tu mai visto in loco alcuno
> Come un' aquila in alto si trasporta,
> Cacciata dalla fame e dal digiuno?
> E come una testuggine alto porta,
> Acciocchè il colpo nel cader la 'nfranga,
> E pasca sè di quella carne morta?"[3]

This "Capitolo," undoubtedly one of the best, is followed by another, "Della Ingratitudine," addressed to Giovanni Folchi[4] The latter is far more hastily written, but has several noteworthy

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p. 419.

[2] The Greek epigram is in the "Anthologia Planudea," iv. 275. The imitation by Ausonias, "In simulacrum Occasionis et Poenitentiæ," contains certain details wanting to the original, but employed by Machiavelli; and this proves beyond doubt that the latter borrowed from Ausonias. "La Penitenza," to which Machiavelli alludes, is not mentioned in the Greek, but only in the Latin epigram, that besides is almost literally translated in the Italian. Poliziano had already collated the Greek epigram with that of Ausonias, and remarked on their points of agreement and difference in his "Miscellanea," chap. xlix. p. 265, Basle edition of 1553. *Vide*, too, Jacobs, "Anthol. Gr.," vol. viii. p. 145 and fol.

[3] "Opere," vol. v. p. 425.

[4] Ibid., vol. v. p. 427.

the former leaves no opening either for satire or philosophic reflection; its merits should be purely poetical, and therefore Machiavelli's pen moves more languidly. The octaves are sufficiently easy, but compared with those of Poliziano and Ariosto, can command but scanty admiration. He also composed six "Canti Carnascialeschi" in different metres. Several of these are dashing and natural, but that is all. They lack the freshness and vivacity of description so often found in those of Lorenzo dei Medici, the creator of this style of poem. Consequently, their abundant grossness is nothing but sheer indecency. In the first of the series, the "Canto dei Diavoli," fiends come leaping down upon the earth, and declaring themselves the authors of all evil and all good, urge mankind to follow their lead. In the second, the "Canto d'amanti disperati e di donne," lovers bemoan the tortures suffered by them in vain for love upon earth, and declare that they are positively happier in Hell; the women are disposed to take pity on them, but it is now too late, the hour of love is past, and they conclude, therefore, by warning maidens not to be too coy, lest they should suffer vain remorse for their wasted hours. The third, entitled "Canto degli Spiriti beati," is a lament on the ills by which mankind is afflicted, especially in Italy.

"Tant è grande la sete
Di gustar quel paese,
Ch' a tutto il mondo diè la legge pria,
Che voi non v'accorgete
Che le vostre contese
Agl' inimici vostri apron la via.
* * * *
"Dipartasi il timore,
Nimicizie e rancori,
Avarizia, superbia e crudeltude.
Risorga in voi l'amore
De' giusti e veri onori,
E torni il mondo a quella prima etade
Così vi fien le strade
Del cielo aperte alla beata gente,
Nè saran di virtù le fiamme spente."[1]

From these verses it will be seen, how even amid the fun and indecency of the "Canti Carnascialeschi," Machiavelli finds room for his usual reflections, his persistent thought of the Italian fatherland, and of ancient valour. The "Canto degli uomini che vendono le pine," and the "Canto de' ciurmadori," have a nearer resemblance than the rest to genuine Carnival songs. They are

[1] "Opere," vol v p 456.

In the "Capitolo dell' Ambizione," addressed to Luigi Guicciardini,[1] he again falls back upon politico-philosophic considerations. It must have been composed soon after its predecessor, for it frequently alludes, as to matters of recent date, to the fraternal struggle of the Petrucci in Sienna, which broke out in the year 1516. Ambition began with Cain, and mankind has never since been delivered from it. Consequently there is no peace in the world; kingdoms and states have been undone; princes overthrown, and if you would know why ambition succeeds in one case and fails in another, I will tell you that this depends upon whether ferocity of mind be coupled with it or not. And should any one blame nature because she no longer gives us men endowed with this energy, I would remind him that education can always correct natuie's defects. Education once made Italy prosperous and powerful, Italy that—

"Or vive (se vita è vivere in pianto)
Sotto quella rovina e quella sorte,
Ch' ha meritato l'ozio suo cotanto."

For if you look upon this land, you will behold nought but slaughter and desolation. Fathers and children are killed, many fly for refuge to strange regions, mothers weep the fate of their daughters, ditches and streams are stained with blood, and full of human remains:

"Dovunque tu gli occhi rivolti e giri,
Di lacrime la terra e sangue è pregna,
E l'aria d'urli, singulti e sospiri."

Such are the fruits of Ambition. But why need I glance afar, when here in Tuscany, Ambition is hovering over the mountains, and has already scattered sparks among these envious people, sufficient to consume both town and country if they be not quickly trampled out by some better ordering of affairs.[2] Machiavelli here alludes to the war with Urbino, begun just at that time and conducted by Lorenzo dei Medici, who started from Florence in May, 1516.

There is little worth remark in the *terzine* of the "Capitolo Pastorale," or the Serenade in octave verse[3] The subject of

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p. 433. [2] Ibid., vol. v. p. 438.

[3] Foscolo praises the "Serenade." *Vide* "Epistolaria," vol. i. p 73; letter to F. Arrivabene, dated 1807. "Machiavelli was not a great poet, but some verses written when in love, show how warmth of feeling spurred his powers." He then quotes some lines of the "Serenade."

conferred upon Italy the one inestimable boon of the new language, should afterwards, as in this dialogue, harshly censure those who call it Italian rather than Florentine or Tuscan. But the dispute concerning the name implies nothing against the merit of the new tongue. Signor Polidori also finds it impossible that one who so constantly deplored the woes of Italy, should then blame Dante for having foretold such terrible ruin to Florence, adding that fortune, to prove the poet a liar, has instead brought the city "to her present state of happiness and tranquility." He interprets these words as a favourable allusion to princely rule, and cannot think, he says, that Machiavelli would have been capable of uttering them.[1] Nevertheless, the ex-secretary frequently praised the condition of Florence at his own day, and in fact its condition was by no means one of persistent wretchedness. There can be no allusion in the Dialogue to the princely rule that was only inaugurated after his death, and, for anything that we know to the contrary, the "Dialogue" may have been written even earlier than 1512, namely, in times which Machiavelli might have unreservedly praised. Besides, all doubts raised by Signor Polidori or others, must yield to the weighty testimony of Ricci, who plainly says that this work is Machiavelli's, although partly written in a manner differing from his usual style He further adds that "Bernardo Machiavelli, son of the said Niccolò, and now seventy-four years of age, declares that he remembers hearing his father speak of it (the 'Dialogue') and often seeing it in his hands."[2] Although it certainly shows a certain stiffness and classicality unusual to Machiavelli, it contains nothing to justify the doubts so often mooted as to the authorship of the "Dialogue." Its differences of form are not only easily to be explained by the different nature of so erudite and literary a theme, but are few in number, and may also be met with in the "Discourses," the "Prince," and the "Histories." The rest of the work is not wanting in the usual vivacity, graphic power, and spontaneity. And on examining its substance, we find comparisons, observations, and thoughts of so much acuteness and originality, and so peculiarly of the Machiavellian stamp, that all doubt is necessarily dispelled.

For this "Dialogo sulla lingua" opens with the fresh enunciation, in a somewhat grandiloquent style, of the sentiment seldom wanting in any work of Niccolò Machiavelli, whether great or small,

[1] *Vide* Polidori's preface, to which we have frequently referred; pp. xiv. and xv.

[2] "Codice Ricci," No. 692 among the Palatine Codices of the National Library in Florence, at p 430.

followed by a very short canzonet, two octaves and a sonnet. The canzonet, beginning with the words: *Se avessi l'arco e l'ale*, is believed by several modern critics to be an imitation of a Greek epigram in the "Anthologia Palatina";[1] but, besides the difficulty of proving that there is any patent imitation, the only codex containing the Anthologia of Cefala, that is of Palatino, was made known by Salmasio some time after the death of Machiavelli. The two octaves and the sonnet have not much value, and treat of love, like the other sonnet printed in the letter dated 31st of January, 1515. We have already mentioned the three sonnets to Giuliano dei Medici, and the epigram on Soderini. It is quite possible that there may be other short poems by Machiavelli still left unedited, for he frequently composed them as a pastime. In the Vatican Library there is a juvenile sonnet of his, addressed to his father, and almost unintelligible, on account of being written in a jargon teeming with slang, reminding us of Burchiello. We publish it in the Appendix.[2]

Now coming to the literary compositions in prose, we will accord the first place to the "Dialogo sulla lingua," a discussion upon the question whether the written language of Dante, Petrarca, and Boccaccio should be styled Italian or Florentine. The reasons adduced by Polidori for his doubts whether this "Dialogue" were really by Machiavelli, do not appear to us of any value. He considers it impossible that Machiavelli, who had said that, at least among many ills, the coming of the barbarians had

[1] Epigram XII. No 78, in the "Anthologia Palatina"

[2] This sonnet will be found in the Appendix (XII.) of the Italian edition, doc. xi, together with the famous one addressed to Giuliano dei Medici, "Io ho, Giuliano, in Gamba un paio di geti," taken from the same Vatican manuscript, and having certain variations deserving of notice. For copies of these sonnets we are indebted to the kindness of Signor Giulio Salvadori, who discovered them in vol. III. of the "Codice miscellaneo vaticano," 5225, at f. 673 and f. 674. They are among many other "Capitoli" by writers of the Cinquecento, including that "Dell' Ambizione" also by Machiavelli. This, however, is in a later handwriting than that of the two sonnets, which are distinguishable from the generality of the sheets in the volume, by the coarser and browner paper upon which they are written. On comparing the characters of these two sonnets with a photographic *fac-simile* of Machiavelli's autograph, Signor Salvadori decided that they were not written by Machiavelli, although in a similar hand. "The writing is certainly of the same school," he said in conclusion, "and although more general in the first than in the second half, was in use throughout the sixteenth century. The paper, made of hemp instead of flax, undoubtedly dates from the Cinquecento" And Professor Monaci of the Roman university (consulted by Signor Salvadori at my request) was also of the same opinion The discovery in the Vatican of so old a copy of the sonnet to Giuliano dei Medici, among other writings of Machiavelli, seems to us to convalidate all that we have said elsewhere (vol ii p. 200 and fol.) regarding its authenticity.

language perishes altogether, and it has to be reconstructed by its writers, even as we are now doing with Latin and Greek.[1] Now I would ask of Dante, what is there that is not Florentine in his writings?" And here, for the sake of discussion, Machiavelli begins an argument in the shape of a dialogue, to prove that with few exceptions every word employed by the immortal poet is purely Florentine.

Every language, he remarks, is necessarily more or less mixed; but that "may be called a national tongue, which converts words borrowed from others to its own use, and is sufficiently strong not to be changed by borrowed words, but to change them, inasmuch as that which it takes from others, it takes to itself and appropriates as its own." He then explains his meaning more clearly by resorting to one of his usual comparisons. "The armies of the Romans comprised two legions of their citizens, in all twelve thousand strong,[2] and twenty thousand men of other nations; nevertheless, as the former were the real backbone of the army, so it was always known as the Roman army. And you, Dante, who have in your writings," so continues Machiavelli, "twenty legions of Florentine words, and make use of Florentine cases, tenses, moods and desinences, how can you believe that chance words can change the name and nature of a language? If you call it the general language, because the same verbs are used throughout Italy, nevertheless these are altered so much as to be quite different. You are misled by this: that you and other Florentine writers attained to so great a celebrity as to cause our vocabulary to be adopted and used throughout Italy. Therefore, compare the books written by other provinces before we wrote, with those written later, and you will at once discern a mighty difference. Writers of other parts of Italy now toil very hard to imitate our tongue, and yet do not always succeed, for nature is stronger than art. When they employ terms of their own, they polish them in the Tuscan fashion. Then in comedies, where it is necessary to use familiar terms and expressions, which must be colloquial in order to be known, all writers who are not Tuscans

[1] Let the reader note the resemblance of these ideas with those expounded in Machiavelli's political works.—New words first enrich a language, but then, by over-increase, corrupt it. It then becomes necessary to purify it, seeking out its primitive forms in the works of its best ancient writers. Virtue fortifies States and renders them powerful. Victory and power give security, and security generates indolence, which corrupts and leads to cowardice, vice, and hence to the decay of States. In order to revive them it is necessary to re-establish them in their primitive form.

[2] This is not quite in agreement with what he says in the "Arte della Guerra." "Opere," vol. iv. pp. 282, 283.

namely, that our chief duty is claimed by our native land, to which we all owe our entire being. He then goes on to say that he has been impelled to write "by the question frequently raised during the past days, whether the idiom employed by the Florentine poets and prose writers should be named Italian, Tuscan, or Florentine. Some assert that it is the adverb of affirmation that gives its special character to every tongue, and thus there would be the language of *sì*, the language of *och* and of *huis*, as that of *yes*, of *hyo* (*ja*), &c. But if this were true, Sicilians and Spaniards would speak the same language. Accordingly, others are found to maintain that only the part of speech called the verb is the chain and essence of a tongue. Therefore, in the opinion of these men, the different tongues may be distinguished by the difference of their verbs; whereas those varying in their nouns and other parts of speech, but not in their verbs, own a common origin. Now, the different provinces of Italy vary a great deal as to their nouns, less as to their pronouns, and very little as to their verbs, and therefore can all be reciprocally understood with sufficient ease. There is some variety of accent in the speech of Italians, but not so much as to prevent them from understanding one another. The Tuscans, for instance, accentuate their words on the vowel sounds, while the Romagnols and Lombards suppress these. Considering, then, the differences existing in the Italian tongue, we must see which of its modes of speech is that wielding the pen. Our first writers, with a few rare exceptions, are all Florentines. Boccaccio tells us that he writes in the Florentine tongue; Petrarca does not mention the subject; Dante states that he writes in court language, and condemns every special Italian tongue including the Florentine. But Dante was hostile to Florence, and censured her in all things. Besides, common speech signifies that which is rather common than special, and, *vice versa*, special signifies that which is rather particular than common, since there is no tongue in existence that has not borrowed somewhat from intercourse with others And new doctrines and new arts must inevitably bring with them new words and modes of speech. Such words, however, become modified by the moods, cases, and accents of the language into which they are introduced, and become incorporated with it, for were it otherwise, languages would be like patchwork and clumsily turned. So with us foreign words are converted into Florentine. It is in this manner that languages are enriched, but they afterwards become mongrel from a super-abundance of novel expressions. It needs, however, a very long course of time to effect all this, excepting in case of an invasion, for then the

it may have in common with other tongues; but consists in the verb, the only part of speech that really changes in the Italian language which has conjugations but no declensions, is equal to asserting that the special character of a language depends upon its grammar. Now this is the identical idea upon which Frederic Schlegel laid the foundation of comparative philology in 1808. And although it has hitherto escaped notice, the "Dialogo sulla lingua" clearly proves that this idea was first divined by Machiavelli three centuries before.

It is true that in explaining his theories, he frequently says: *certain persons hold (tengono alcuni)*. This might lead to the supposition that he had borrowed his fundamental idea from others. But it should first be remembered that Machiavelli, as we have seen elsewhere, confessed that he found it expedient to make use of this or a like expression, whenever he had to proclaim some very new or daring theory or reflection of his own, the better to attract his readers' attention.[1] Besides, not only, so far as we know, is there no trace, even of the remotest kind, of this idea to be found among the scholars of his time, but almost to the present day it has always been combated in Italy, where the general tendency of philology has been to maintain the contrary doctrine, that the distinctive character of a language is to be sought in its vocabulary. Machiavelli not only started from the opposite principle, but proved it to be his own, by deducing from it very just consequences which were both novel and startling at that day. Certainly the times were not then ripe, nor could he be possessed of the requisite knowledge, for the promotion of the great revolution in science that has only become possible in our own age. Yet even from his secondary observations, and the applications he makes of his idea, it is plain that he had the fullest appreciation of its fecundity and worth. The importance he assigned to accent; his confutation of the hypothesis advanced by Dante, of a court language composed of many dialects, on the ground that it would be a patchwork language with no life in it; his explanation of the mode in which the Florentine speech, while accepting many words belonging to other dialects, assimilated, and made them its own, by subjecting them to its own desinences and special grammatical forms; all this, presented as the logical consequence of his first fundamental idea, is reasoned out in a manner reminding us of the method of a modern philologist. And this furnishes additional proof that, whenever it is a question of discovering the substantial characteristics of social, moral, or intellectual phenomena, and of determining their laws, the genius of

[1] *Vide* vol. i p. 468 of this work.

fail of success. For if one of these should wish to use sayings of his own district, he will make a garment of patch-work; but if he refuses to use them, being ignorant of Tuscan expressions, he will produce a maimed and imperfect piece of work. And I will cite as an example 'I Suppositi' of Ariosto of Ferrara.[1] Here you have an elegant composition, an ornate and regular style; a plot that is well arranged and better developed; but you will find it devoid of the witticisms required for a comedy of that kind, and from no other cause than that I have mentioned, namely, because the author rejected Ferrarese sayings and did not know any Florentine ones."[2]

He then quotes several examples of Ferrarese modes of expression, fitting very badly with the Florentine, and concludes by saying that in order to write well we must understand all the properties of the language, and to understand these must study their sources, since otherwise we have a composition in which one part is out of harmony with the other. "Poetry passed from Provence to Sicily, thence to Tuscany, and more especially to Florence, because there the most suitable language was to be found. And now that the language is formed, Ferrarese, Neapolitans, Venetians, are found to write well and to have very apt powers of expression, the which could never have come about had not the great Florentine writers first taught them how to forget the native barbarism, in which they were plunged by reason of their familiar dialect. It must, therefore, be concluded that Italy has no court or common language, because that to which this name has been applied is founded upon the Florentine tongue, to which as to an original source it is necessary to revert; and accordingly even our adversaries, without they be truly stubborn, must acknowledge the tongue to be Florentine."[3]

When we consider the condition of philological science among the Italian scholars of that time; when we consider the praise lavished even in our own day upon Leonardo Aretino, merely because he had asserted the existence of a spoken Latin different from the written tongue; and when we remember that Machiavelli was neither a learned man nor a philologist, we must allow that his observations afford additional proofs of his intellectual powers. To assert that the special characteristics of a language do not consist in the greater or lesser number of words which

[1] From the examples given by him, it is evident that he quotes from the prose version of the "Suppositi." This makes it probable that the "Dialogue" was written before Ariosto had versified his play, and therefore supports the theory of its being dated before 1512.

[2] "Opere," vol. v. p. 19.

[3] Ibid, vol. v. p. 21.

lived him. Who, too, would credit him with the authorship of so contorted and pedantic a composition? This, for instance, is its opening period :—

"I dare not place my timid hand on the sheet, to trace this tedious commencement; indeed, the more do I ponder all these miseries in my head, so much the more do I shrink from the horrible description of them; and although I have seen everything, to speak of it renews my painful tears; nor do I know from which side I ought to make a beginning, and were it allowed me, would willingly retreat from this undertaking."[1] It continues in the same strain, and we presently come to the following description of a lady's charms: "Her fresh and delicate flesh was like unto fair ivory, yet so tender and soft as to preserve the traces of even the slightest touch, no less than the yielding and dewy young grass of a verdant meadow preserves the footmarks of slender little animals. But what shall I say of her mellifluous and delicate mouth placed between banks dressed with roses and privet, and wearing so sad an air that I cannot tell how it could chance to shine with so celestial a smile! The rosy lips over the white and polished teeth seemed like burning rubies and oriental pearls mingled together. She had stolen from Juno the shape of her softly spreading nose, as from Venus her white and well-filled cheeks," &c.[2]

Then, to mention that a man was seated on the Spini bench, he starts with these words: "And on the nowadays solitary bench of the Spini," &c., &c.,[3] the verb only coming in some three or four lines farther on. Accordingly, Macaulay is quite justified in declaring that no external evidence could induce him to think Machiavelli guilty of so detestable a piece of writing, that would scarcely be pardonable as the production of some foolish boy student of rhetoric.[4]

forum, et est plurea." Then follows the description of the plague, in Machiavelli's handwriting, with an introductory notice, that has been already published by Polidori and others. This preface is by another hand, and is different from that to be found farther on in the copy by Machiavelli. The "Descrizione" is followed by these words, in the same handwriting as that of the very curious Latinity at the commencement. "Copiata allibro grande nero di Lorenzo alla fini" (then come some doubtful marks, probably indicating the number of the sheet) "et cosi mi disse." *Vide* "Opere Minori" di N. Machiavelli, note to p. 415. Florence, Le Monnier, 1852.

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p. 36. This and nearly the whole of the introduction is in Machiavelli's handwriting. Longer and no less intricate is the other in the same Codex, but by a different hand.

[2] Ibid., vol. v. pp. 46, 47. [3] Ibid., p. 45.

[4] "Of this last composition, the strongest external evidence would scarcely induce us to believe him guilty. Nothing was ever written more detestable in

Machiavelli is always displayed in its fullest might, and that his vision is not only far-reaching, but piercing deep below the surface of things.

The authenticity of another composition in the form of an epistle, entitled "Descrizioné della Peste di Firenze dell' anno 1527,"[1] has been contested with much greater reason, although the theory of its genuineness is supported by the fact that we positively have a copy of it in Machiavelli's handwriting. But this autograph contains additions and corrections from the pen of Lorenzo di Filippo Strozzi, to whom the entire "Descrizione" is attributed,[2] according to the notes in another ancient hand at different pages of the manuscript itself. This leads us to suppose that, in the same way that Machiavelli had inserted a copy of the "Commedia in versi," which it is impossible to believe to be his, in this very Codex, he also wrote out a composition of his friend Lorenzo Strozzi, who afterwards revised and corrected it in his own hand. Surely Strozzi would not have dared to add touches of his own to any composition of his celebrated friend? And all uncertainty disappears on the hastiest perusal of this "Descrizione," which could never be imputed to Machiavelli by any one acquainted with his works.

For, even putting aside the fact that 1527 was the year in which Machiavelli died, it is by no means credible that amid the many grave thoughts by which he was at that time overwhelmed, he could have found leisure to employ himself upon a description of the plague. This scourge had begun a few years before, and the manuscript may be incorrectly dated. But how can we suppose that, either in 1527, or some years earlier, Machiavelli could have spoken of marrying again, according to the allusion in the "Descrizione," when it is known that his wife Marietta out-

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p. 36.

[2] The Codex containing this autograph is that from which we have often given quotations, and which is described in the pamphlet, "Quarto Centenario," &c., under the heading: "Libro degli autografi Machiavelliani della Magliabecchiana." It was formerly marked among the Magliabechian MSS. by the figures 1451, and in the Strozzi collection as No. 366. It is now preserved among the most valued possessions of the Florence National Library, and is a volume consisting of eight different MSS., of which six are Machiavelli's autographs, including this "Descrizione della Peste." On the first sheet are the words: "Epistola fatta per la peste," and immediately following: "hanc epistolam agit laurentius Philippi stroci, cives florentinus, qui colebant plateam strociorum apud forum, ed est multa plurcha, quia fecit illam Cum magna diligentia et studio temporis et laboris, et ob id laudo illam Cum amiratione ob elegantiam illius, et doctrinam magniam, ô rem inauditam et amirabilem, quod est ista et testor Deum et homines bonos." At the back of sheet 5*a* the same declaration is repeated in no less strange and incorrect language, apparently almost a first attempt at writing: "Questa Pistola compose Laurentius Philippi Strozi cives florentinus, que colebat plateam strociorum-apud

to seek himself a wife. Coming to Florence he there married a certain Onesta, daughter of Amerigo Donati; and speedily by her pride, and extravagance, her habits and her relations, found himself reduced to poverty and despair. And the devils he had brought with him as attendants were positively glad to return to the flames of the infernal regions. Belphagor himself was so persecuted by his creditors that at last he was obliged to avoid imprisonment by flight. Being pursued by a mob of creditors, magistrates and roughs, he was concealed and rescued by a peasant, on whom, in his gratitude, he promised to bestow vast riches in the following way. Whenever the peasant should hear of any woman possessed by an evil spirit, he was to go to exorcise it, for then he, Belphagor, would immediately quit the woman's body, so that his deliverer might earn his reward. And on two occasions the peasant followed this advice much to his own profit. But the second time, the fiend, who had entered into the daughter of the King of Naples, said to him, Take care that this be the last time you come to turn me out; for if you try to do it again, you will bitterly repent it. So the peasant having received fifty thousand ducats from the king, and being well content with his gains, determined to go home and live quietly. But the fame of his mysterious power having spread everywhere, and the daughter of the French king Louis VII. being likewise possessed, that monarch sought his help, and would take no refusal. Accordingly, the peasant was obliged to use his power for the third time. But no sooner did he go near the princess, than the fiend reminded him of his warning, and threatened to make him repent if he did not instantly go away. On the other hand, the king would hear no reason, and threatened him with death. Thus placed between hammer and anvil, the peasant resorted to craft. He ordered the erection of a great wooden stand in the square of *Nôtre Dame*, upon which all the great lords and prelates of the kingdom were to be assembled. There was to be an altar in the centre of the square, and the princess was to be led up to it after Mass had been celebrated. In one corner there was to be a band of at least twenty persons, furnished with trumpets, horns, drums, pipes and other very noisy instruments, and the players were to rush towards the altar, playing as loudly as possible the moment the peasant gave the signal by waving his hat in the air. All was ready; the dignitaries were on the stand, the square thronged with people, mass had been performed, and the princess stood before the altar. Belphagor, meanwhile, was showering threats on the peasant, again warning him that if he did not instantly go away something very terrible would happen to him. But the man

"Il Dialogo dell' ira e dei modi di curaila," also written in a very contorted style, has never been attributed to Machiavelli, excepting by Poggiali and one or two others. As we have previously said, it is a translation of Plutarch's pamphlet, "On how to avoid anger."[1] Regarding this, too, it will, we think, be enough to quote a few sentences serving to justify the almost unanimous verdict. This is the first sentence: "Rightly it seems to me, dearest Cosimo, do those prudent painters act, who before completely finishing their work, remove it from their sight for some time, in order that, during the interval, the eye, by losing its constant habit of regarding the painting and then beginning to look upon it afresh, may judge of it better and more accurately, and may recognize those defects in it that might otherwise have been hidden from them by continued familiarity."[2] We cannot think that any one will believe that a period of this kind—positively one of the simplest and least involved of the whole dialogue—could possibly be attributed to Machiavelli.

The famous "Novella di Belfagor arcidiavolo" is undoubtedly his. It has neither much plot, nor much character-painting, and may be described as a witty conceit and pleasantry of the kind often found among our Italian *novelle.* When Pluto noticed that all who arrived in Hell agreed in complaints against their wives, to whom they attributed their perdition, he assembled his counsellors, and it was decided to investigate the truth of the matter. For this purpose the arch-fiend Belphagor was despatched to earth in human shape, with one hundred thousand ducats in his pocket,

matter and manner. The narrations, the reflections, the jokes, the lamentations are all the very worst of their respective kinds. A foolish schoolboy might write such a piece, and after he had written it, think it much finer than the incomparable introduction of the 'Decameron.' But that a shrewd statesman, whose earliest works are characterized by manliness of thought and language, should at near sixty years of age descend to such puerility, is utterly inconceivable" (Macaulay's "Essays," vol. i. p 89). By these words Macaulay shows much greater accuracy of judgment and literary taste than Leo, who harps upon the "Descrizione della Peste" in order to say harsh things of Machiavelli's moral character: "Wie leicht Machiavelli mit dem Tode umspringt, und wie er alles, was anderen schrecklich ist, mit der grossten Anmuth zu verhohnen weiss, sieht man recht gut aus der satyrischen Erzahlung einer fingirten Heirath wahrend der Pest im Jahr 1527 in Florenz; es enthalt diese Erzahlung Zugleich in jeder Zeile Beweise wie Machiavelli zu einer Zeit, wo ihn uberall Ungluck umgab, und kaum vier Wochen vor seinem eignem Tode (also nicht mehr bei jungen Jahren) seine Phantasie noch voll Bilder weiblicher Schonheit und sinnlicher Verhaltnisse zu Weibern hatte." *Vide* the preface frequently quoted by us, of Leo's German translation of the letters of Machiavelli, p xiv note.

[1] In vol. i. of this translation, p. 241 note; and Appendix (II.) of Italian edition, document xviii

[2] "Opere Minori," Florence, Le Monnier, 1852, p. 626.

oral tradition if not indeed in a written form, and was
by Machiavelli. It was afterwards borrowed by Brevio, I
sovino, and others, among whom we must not forget
La Fontaine, who was more successful in his imitation
in his other tale borrowed from "La Mandragola."
also learnt that a tale much resembling Belphagor is
story at the present day even among the Southern Sclav

We need only record the titles of a few other short
tions, of little or no importance. The "Capitoli per un
compagnia[2] is merely a laughable trifle. The "A
fatta da un magistrato nell' ingresso dell' ufficio" (a m
inaugural address on taking office)[3] consists only of a fe
remarks on justice, with regard to the public welfare, tog
a long extract from the "Divina Commedia" on the san
It reads like a roughly sketched beginning to som
exercise. There is little more to be said of the "Discorso
which seems to have been written for recital at some r
one of the religious confraternities abounding in Floren
time, and treats with much unction, and a certain ting
irony, of the duties and advantages of charity to our n
and obedience to the Almighty. It has no further cl
our attention.

[1] Prof. L. Macun, "Niccolò Machiavelli als Dichter, Historiker
man." This is an address published on the occasion of the third
the Gymnasium of Gratz. In note 2, at page 11, the author says: "
ist diese Novelle fur die Sudslaven dadurch, dass sie dort im Volke
laufig ist, wie man aus Stojanovics's 'Puc'ke pripovedke,' S. 133
('Racconti popolari—Della cattiva moglie') ersehen kann." The
inquires, how the tale could have penetrated to that part of the
may be replied that the fact is easily explainable by the eastern o
story.

[2] "Opere," vol. v. p 51. [3] Ibid, vol v p. 57. [4] Ibid, vol. v.

only replied by waving his hat on high, and instantly the band advanced making a tremendous noise with their instruments. The fiend, startled by the unexpected clamour, cried out: "What does this mean?" "Alas, alas!" replied the peasant, "here is your wife coming to fetch you." At this news Belphagor stayed to hear no more, scampered back to Hell at the top of his speed, and ever after testified to the perils and tribulations of the married state.[1]

Some writers have pretended that Machiavelli designed this pleasant fable as an allusion to the sufferings inflicted upon him by his wife Marietta; but all the best-known facts and most authentic documents clearly prove the falsity of this assertion. Marietta, as we have seen, was a good wife to him, and her husband deserved more reproof from her, than she from him.[2] Others have pretended that Machiavelli was not the author of this tale, because another and but slightly different version was brought out under the name of Monsignore Giovanni Brevio in the year 1545. In 1549, however, the printers Giunti republished it in its original form, with Machiavelli's name on the title page and a declaraton to the effect that "in this way they vindicated the rights of its creator, which had been usurped by a person desirous of enjoying the honour of another's toil."[3] The original manuscript of the tale was afterwards discovered in the Florence National Library,[4] and this put an end to dispute, since the intrinsic tests of style and diction were all in favour of Machiavelli. The theme of its Belphagor was not of his own invention, for it is to be found in the "Forty Viziers," a Turkish book taken from an Arabian source, derived in its turn from an Indian original.[5] Therefore it came to Italy from the East, by

[1] "Opere," vol. v. p. 22 and fol.

[2] *Vide*, among other proofs, an essay by Innocenzio Giampieri on "Niccolò Machiavelli and Marietta Corsini," in the volume entitled: "Monumenti del Giardino Puccini," pp. 275–290. Pistoia, the Cino Press, 1845.

[3] On a copy of Giunti's edition, is the following inscription in the handwriting of Magliabechi: "This tale by Niccolò Machiavelli is included among those of Brevio, and also in part ii. of Doni's Libreria, and in canto iii. of the very nonsensical tragi-comic poem Tristarello, and in Sansovino's collection of tales, In Machiavelli's original copy kindly presented to me by Signor Benvenuti, there are several very interesting variations." Signor Gargani republished a small edition of thirty numbered copies from the autograph manuscript, and eight copies bearing his name (Florence, Dotti, 1869) Gargani's preface contains several items of information respecting the tale

[4] Class vii. No 335.

[5] Artaud, "Machiavelli, son génie et ses erreurs," vol ii. p. 94. We believe this author to have been the first to observe that this tale was to be found in the "Quaranta Visiri," which he had read in Gauthier's translation And Professor Fausto Lasinio considers that Belphagor was imported into Italy in the "Quaranta Visiri."

Ciceronian Latin, and not satisfied with recording events in the order of occurrence from day to day, they tried to group them skilfully after the manner of their usual model, Titus Livy. They despised chronicles, because they aspired to the classic dignity of history, but their interpretation of such dignity consisted in magnifying the events they narrated, and transforming the smallest Florentine street riots into tremendous conflicts. Their personages were always draped in the Roman *toga*, always uttered solemn speeches. Aretino applied himself to writing, "because the glorious deeds of the Florentine people deserve transmission to posterity, and their war with Pisa may be compared to that of the Romans with Carthage. But the difficulty of the enterprise arouses the writer's alarm, and above all the roughness of modern names, upon which it is impossible to confer any elegance."[1] Accordingly, Aretino's "History," like those of the learned men in general, is void of all local colour, all spontaneous movement, and as a source of genuine information is inferior not only to the Chronicles of the Trecento, but even to later histories of altogether slighter merit.

In reading the histories of Aretino and Bracciolini, no one could suppose that both these writers had spent many years in Florence, and been secretaries of the Republic. They give no anecdotes, no colouring of time or place, no portraits from life. Yet even in these works the Humanists show certain distinguishing merits of their own. It is true that they grouped their facts in a purely literary way, for, whether consciously or unconsciously, eloquence was their sole aim, and they were still faithful to the division of history by years, after the fashion of the old chroniclers, just as though each year necessarily formed a separate period. Nevertheless, this extrinsic exterior unity served later to open the way to the intrinsic unity of the logical connection of facts; and although it must be confessed that the Humanists never attained to this point, they instinctively aimed at it. Occasionally Aretino says so clearly enough, for he even declares his intention of explaining "the causes of events, and delivering judgment on things past and gone"[2] And to this merit was added that of critical inquiry, which was certainly initiated by the Humanists.

Unsatisfied with the plain narration of contemporary events, and wishing to embrace a much vaster field, they were compelled

[1] "Nominumque denique asperitas, vix cuius cumque elegantiæ patiens" Leonardo Aretino, "Istoria fiorentina tradotta in volgare" by Donato Acciajoli, "col testo a fronte," vol. i. p. 62. Florence, Le Monnier, 3 vols., 1856, 1858, 1860. In 1861, the same publisher issued the translation in separate form, in a 12mo vol. of his "Biblioteca Nazionale."

[2] L. Aretino, "Istorie," *loc. cit.*



CHAPTER XII.

FLORENTINE HISTORIANS.

"The Florentine Histories"—Book first, or the general introduction.



T the time that Machiavelli began to write his Histories, there were two schools of historians in Florence, namely, those still following in the track of Villani, and the Learned men, pursuing a totally different road. Numbers of chronicles, annals, *prioristi*, and diaries were then written, recording events as they happened day by day; and in certain Tuscan households the custom has been maintained, even to the present time. But during the period of which we write, no works of this description succeeded in achieving a deserved literary fame. The "Tumulto dei Ciompi" of Gino Capponi, the "Istorie" of Giovanni Cambi, the "Diario" of Biagio Buonaccorsi, and many other similar compositions, are certainly precious stores of information, but of very slight value as works of art. Accordingly, the men of learning had stood for some time in the first rank, and having thrown the chroniclers into the shade and found imitators in all parts of Italy, no one but the small fry and those who were not *literati* by profession, dared any longer to follow in the old course. In Florence Leonardo Aretino and Poggio Bracciolini had been the chief representatives of the school of learned historians, and their fame was still very great and widespread. As we have noted elsewhere,[1] their works were written in

[1] We have alluded to this in "Introduction," vol. i. of this work, p. 94 and fol.

and more haste than Aretino, but also with greater vivacity and an easier Latin style. This latter merit sufficed to make his book more popular among his contemporaries.

But learned history, too, was on the decline in Machiavelli's day. Aretino and Bracciolini, who had given it renown, were already of a past generation. The Italian tongue being now held in esteem, Italian ambassadors and statesmen having entered upon serious and persevering study of political events, a different treatment of history was demanded. It had now to be written in the national idiom, to be eloquent, lively, and founded on study of reality, on knowledge of human nature and of the true causes of facts that must have some logical connection. It was, in short, the modern form of history, as sought by us all even at the present day, and then on the point of coming into existence. For this reason, when the friends of Machiavelli discovered the new historic style in his "Vita di Castruccio Castracani," they were prodigal of their praise and encouraged him by all means to pursue that branch of composition. It should not, however, be forgotten that Guicciardini had already written the "Storia Fiorentina," of which we have made mention. And although this was only a juvenile work, left unpublished until our own day and unknown to all in his own times, yet it has the substantial characteristics of the civil and modern history that was one of the most original creations of the Italians of the Renaissance. It is only in the limitation of his narrative to almost exclusively contemporary events, and his partial adherence to the old division by years, that his work shows any lingering trace of connection with the old-fashioned chronicles or annals. For his narrative shows marvellous graphic power and precision, as well as great accuracy of research from original documents. His logical connection of events, analysis of the nature of politicians, exact description of parties and personal ambitions, and above all of the action exercised upon events by princes, party-leaders, and popular passions, give this history an essentially original and modern character.

Machiavelli entirely broke away from the chronicle form. Yet he was unacquainted with Guicciardini's juvenile work. For its author, being overwhelmed with business, thought it of little importance, and seems to have kept it almost concealed. When commissioned, through the intervention of Cardinal dei Medici, to write a history of Florence, Machiavelli determined to begin his narrative from the year 1434. That was the year in which *Cosimo il Vecchio* returned from exile practically a potentate, and the power of the Medici was at last consolidated. The

to employ research, and ended by weighing and comparing their sources of information. We already know that Flavio Biondi was the first and most successful of these men, as being the real inaugurator of historic criticism, while others were laying the foundations of philosophical and philological criticism. He not only examined and discussed the amount of credence to be assigned to the authorities consulted by him; but even in relating contemporary facts gleaned from eye-witnesses, was careful to examine whether such witnesses were in a position to know the truth and to chronicle it faithfully. He sometimes shows wonderful penetration, in extracting, even from the study of a popular saying, proofs of the credibility of certain historic facts.[1] Criticism seemed a spontaneous growth in those days, and the writers who first essayed it were barely aware of what they were undertaking. We see that Aretino put aside all the current and fabulous traditions concerning the origin of Florence, and sought its primitive history in such information as could be gleaned from classic authors regarding the Etruscans, and the colonies planted by the Romans in Tuscany. Further on, in a brief sketch of the general history of the Middle Ages, he attempted to collect some confused notices on the origin of the Communes. All this constitutes his first book. In the second book he begins the special history of Florence and carries it on through eleven others down to the commencement of the fifteenth century. But this part of his work is devoid of any original research or novel information; everything is sacrificed to classicality of form, and the internal events of the Republic are neglected for the sake of pompous periods in honour of its military enterprises. Bracciolini did the same, for after rapidly tracing in six or seven pages the history of the Republic down to 1350, he slackens his pace, and devotes himself solely to a magniloquent account of campaigns which, in these pages, assume the proportions of the wars of ancient Rome.[2] He writes with less critical power

[1] Some new monographs on Flavio Biondo have been recently published: "Flavio Biondo sein Leben und seine Werke": Inaugural Dissertation von Alfred Masius Leipzig, Teubner, 1879; P. Buchholz, "Die Quellen der Historiarum Decades des Flavius Blondus:" Inaugural Dissertation, Naumburg, Sieling, 1881. And some important notices upon the same author by A. Wielmanns appear in the "Gottingische gelehrten Anzeigen" of 1879

[2] To give an idea of the scanty attention accorded by him to internal events, this is how he speaks of the very serious revolt known as the "Tumulto dei Ciompi": "Quieta ab externis bellis civitate, pax in dissensiones domesticas versa est. Nam civiles discordiæ e vestigio civitatem invasere: quæ pestis omni externa bello perniciosior est; inde enim et rerum publicarum interitus et urbium sequitur eversis." And this is all that he says on the subject. Poggii, "Historia Fiorentina," p 78. Venetiis, Hertz, 1715.

the critics. The idea of narrating for the first time, in broad outline, the general history of the Middle Ages, was regarded by them as a new and original conception; they even sought to attribute great learning to this work, and a novel and exact method of arrangement giving prominence to all leading facts, and leaving aside secondary matters, so that, in their opinion, from Machiavelli's day to our own, it has always been necessary to imitate him in these respects.[1] But to put things on a right footing, we must start by remembering that there was nothing new in the idea of a general history of the Middle Ages. Flavio Biondo had already written a similar history on a large scale, and later Leonardo Aretino had made it the principal theme of his first book, as was afterwards done by Machiavelli. Also as regards the latter's erudition, it must be admitted that he derived it entirely from Biondo, often giving a summary and sometimes literal translation of his work.[2] Many errors of fact were merely transferred from the earlier to the later work, and Machiavelli also borrowed from the same source all that was best in his general arrangement of materials, which at other times he often threw into wilful and unnecessary confusion. Nevertheless, having to compress into sixty octavo pages the entire contents of an enormous folio, it was impossible for him to produce a very

[1] "Machiavelli hat in diesem ersten Abschnitte, der gleichsam eine Einleitung in die florentinische Specialgeschichte bildet, die Epochen der italienischen Geschichte bis zum XV. Jahrhundert hin so geschieden, dass seitdem keiner seine Spur verlassen konnte, ohne sogleich Mangel an Einsicht in die Sache zu verrathen." This is the opinion expressed by Gervinus in his "Historische Schriften," p 165.

[2] Blondi Flavii forliviensis, "Historiarum ab inclinatione Romanorum," libri XXXI. Basilleae, ex officina Frobeniana, 1531. As to the name of this writer, called by some Biondo Flavio, and by others Flavio Biondo, the reasons leading to the use of both forms may be found in the previously quoted work of Masius.

I should also observe that a compendium of Flavio Biondo's history was made by Pope Pius II, and was afterwards translated into Italian: "Abreviatio Pii II. Pont. max, supra Decades Blondi ab inclinatione imperii usque ad tempora Joannis vicesimi tertii Pont. maxi." Venetiis per Thomam Alexandrinum, anno salutis MCCCCLXXXIIII. III. kalendas iulii. "Le historie del Biondo da la declination de l'imperio di Roma insino al tempo suo (che vi corseio circa mille anni), ridotte in compendio da Papa Pio, e tradotte per Lucio Fauno in buona lingua volgare," vol i., Venice, 1543; vol. ii., Venice, per Michel Tromezino, 1550. This is the edition in the National Library at Florence.

It naturally occurred to us that, to save time and trouble, Machiavelli might have made use of this compendium in his epitome of Biondo's narrative; but careful examination compelled us to recognize that on the contrary he had worked from the original. Many expressions and sometimes whole periods existing in Biondo's work, and that are omitted in the compendium of Pius II., reappear in Machiavelli, thus dispelling all doubt. For that reason we will cite a few of the fragments borrowed by Machiavelli.

events of preceding times had been already treated by Aretino and Bracciolini, "*two most excellent historians.*"[1] He was, however, speedily obliged to recognize that they had only spoken of external wars, while regarding civil dissensions, internal enmities and their effects, they had either preserved total silence or merely made a few casual remarks. And this was their mistake, since no lesson can be more useful to rulers than that which teaches the *causes* of enmities and factions, especially in a city such as Florence, where factions were of infinite number, brought about exile, death and devastation, and yet instead of hindering the prosperity of the Republic, seemed on the contrary to augment it.

This, then, was the lesson Machiavelli proposed to teach, and his promise was not confined to empty words as in Aretino's history, but was the leading idea permeating his whole work, constituting its character, demonstrating its great originality, and rendering its author the real originator of civil and political history.

The work is divided into eight books, forming three parts, kept very distinct one from the other. The first is a general introduction to the history of the Middle Ages for the purpose of inquiring into the historical origin of the Commune, and forming a clear idea of the new civilization that arose after the fall of the Roman Empire. This book, starting from the barbarian invasions, extends to the first years of the fifteenth century, and may be regarded as a separate work. The three following books are devoted to the civil and internal history of Florence, from its origin down to Cosimo's return in 1434. The last four carry on the narrative from that date down to 1492, the year of the death of Lorenzo the Magnificent. And at this point the author again changes his method, seemingly unwilling to dwell upon internal vicissitudes of the Republic, which would have obliged him to give a minute account of the destruction of liberty by the Medici. For as Machiavelli wrote by command of Cardinal dei Medici, to whom, when Pope, the work was afterwards dedicated, he was naturally obliged to avoid a theme that he was neither able nor willing to treat with the stony impassibility shown in Guicciardini's "Storia Fiorentina." He therefore dwelt chiefly on the external wars carried on during those years by the captains of adventure, and was thus able to demonstrate their hurtfulness, the inefficiency of their troops, and the dangers they entailed upon the Italian States. Then follow the "Frammenti storici," intended to constitute the ninth book, which was left incomplete.

The first book has been much praised and indeed extolled by

[1] Proem to the "Istorie Fiorentine, Opere," vol. i. p. cli.

praise accorded to him on the score of his logical co-ordination of events, his division of them into principal and secondary, and his dwelling on the former while hastily skimming the latter. We find on the contrary, that instead of an objective arrangement of his facts, he disposed them according to a fixed idea, to which he sometimes forced them to conform. And it is quite clear that the events he dwells upon at greatest length are not those of the highest intrinsic importance, but rather those throwing the best light upon his leading idea, for he often shows the strangest neglect of everything unadapted to that end. Indeed, both the merits and defects of the work now under examination are directly traceable to its author's ruling idea. Few words are needed to show in what that idea consisted. It will offer itself spontaneously to our view, as soon as we begin a rapid and summary review of the book.

After alluding to the earlier Germanic invasions, their causes and origin, Machiavelli pauses to give a hasty account of the capture and sack of Rome by Alaric and his Visigoths; of the irruptions of the Huns under Attila, and of the Vandals led by Genseric, and then proceeds to the invasion of Odoacer, King of the Eruli, who, "quitting his dominions on the Danube, assumed the title of King of Rome, and was the first of the popular chieftains then ravaging the world, to make a settled abode in Italy."[1] But he passes rapidly over this part of his work. The first figure that he stays to contemplate and describe with special interest, placing it in high relief, and towering like a giant over the beginning of his narrative, is that of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, who after vanquishing Odoacer succeeded to his throne with the title of King of Italy, and tried to reduce the country to order by preserving and restoring Roman institutions. At this point Machiavelli is fired with enthusiasm; he cannot hurry on at his usual pace, when met, as it were, on the threshold of his history by a true and genuine presentment of the Prince-reformer, that was his life-long ideal. Accordingly he was instantly fascinated by Theodoric. And the better to make the real character he describes correspond with his ideal hero, he is careful, while always following the lines of Biondo's work, to omit or attenuate certain details reminding us too clearly that the real individual in question was a barbarian conqueror instead of a deliverer. Thus, where Biondo states that Theodoric not only prevented all Romans and Italians from entering the army, and even from bearing weapons, Machia-

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p. 7. Sometimes even the simplest phrases of this first book remind us of Biondo: "Sed jam ad barbarorum regem qui primus Romam et Italiam possedit, revertamur" (Blondii Flavii, "Historiarum," &c., p. 31).

exact imitation. Besides, in Machiavelli's work we meet with a new conception of general politics, far above the capacity of Biondo, permeating the whole of this first book, and endowing it, as we shall see, with a special value of its own. But first let us speak of its imitative points.

After a few brief remarks on the invasions of the barbarians in general, Machiavelli says that after the repulse of the Cimbri by Marius, the Visigoths were the next invaders, and were so thoroughly routed by Theodosius that they submitted to his sway and served under his banners. But when at his decease he was succeeded by his sons, Arcadius and Honorius, these were advised by Stilicho to refuse payment to the Visigoths: whereupon the latter, for the sake of revenge, chose Alaric for their king, and attacked and pillaged Rome. All this narrative is imitated from Biondo, and its concluding part is almost a literal translation.[1] It continues in the same way. The account of the passage of the Vandals into Africa at the summons of Bonifacius, who governed there in the name of the empire, is likewise copied from Biondo. The curious and erroneous notices upon England were also derived by Machiavelli from the same source. The portrait of Theodoric is more original; nevertheless, occasional sentences betray that in penning this description the author had not entirely forgotten to refer to Biondo's work. He relies still more upon it in speaking of the Longobards, and follows it closely in treating of the Greeks, and especially of Narsetes and Longinus. At points where the very devout Biondo indulged in lengthy passages on the popes and their history, Machiavelli ceases to follow him, relates but few events, and indulges instead in many reflections of his own. But when he speaks of the Communes, we again come upon traces of the parent author. And the same occurs wherever there is simple narrative without any theoretical reflections. For these latter were always Machiavelli's own, neither copied, nor imitated from any source. Even the account of the origin of Venice, so highly extolled for its eloquence, and showing all the distinctive qualities of Machiavelli's style, seems to have been mainly derived from the same model. Comparison of the two writers will suffice to prove the truth of all that we have said.

Nor can it be allowed that Machiavelli deserves the farther

[1] Compare "Opere," vol. i. pp. 2, 3; Blondi, "Historiarum," &c., pp. 7, 8; "Opere," vol. i. pp. 4, 5; Blondi, "Historiarum," &c, pp. 20, 21; "Opere," vol. i. pp. 45, 46; Blondi, "Historiarum," p 31; "Opere," vol. i. p. 13; Blondi, "Historiarum," pp. 101, 102; "Opere," vol. i. p. 13; Blondi, "Historiarum," pp 98, 99

be seen."[1] Here the extent of the writer's enthusiasm is revealed by the rising eloquence of his style.

The death of Theodoric is followed by the dominion of the Greeks through the conquests of Belisarius and Narsetes. Then the latter, roused to indignation against the Grecian Emperor, summoned the Longobards, who became the rulers of Italy. Instead of uniting the country, they divided it into thirty dukedoms, and were thus not only prevented from establishing their sway over the whole of it, but gave the popes occasion to acquire increasing prominence, and govern the country at their will by fostering its divisions In fact, when the pontiffs perceived that, notwithstanding their stratagems, they were at the mercy of the Longobards, and might no longer hope for assistance from the Grecian Emperor, whose power had declined, they called the Franks into Italy." "Accordingly, all the wars made by the barbarians upon Italy in these times were chiefly promoted by the popes, and nearly all the barbaric hordes that swept over the land had come at their call. The which course of proceeding is still pursued in our own day, and has kept and still keeps Italy disunited and defenceless. Therefore, in describing the events which have occurred from those times to the present, we shall no longer have to relate the fall of the empire, which has been cast down, but the rise of the pontiffs and of those other princes who then ruled in Italy until the coming of Charles VIII. And it will be shown how the popes, first by their edicts, then by these and force of arms, combined with indulgences, commanded both terror and respect; and how by their evil use of either attribute, they have lost the former, and only maintain the latter at the pleasure of others."[2]

This is the second idea continually prominent thoughout the first book of the "Storie." On the one hand the Prince-reformer, who seeks to re-unite Italy, relieve her from miseries and woes and give her happiness; on the other the popes, who, to maintain their own power, keep the country divided, plunge it in desolation, and are therefore the objects of Machiavelli's hatred. All this is urged and reiterated by him both with force and eloquence in a book written by command of and dedicated to a Pope. Such was the Machiavelli, depicted to us as cunning, dissimulating, and false On the contrary, at all moments, no matter to whom he addressed himself, nor to what extent his words might be offensive to his listeners or injurious to himself, he was never able either to hide or modify his scientific and political conceptions. Not even in the present instance, when he required the Pope's help for the continu-

[1] "Opere," vol i pp 9-11.

[2] Vol. i. p 18.

velli says "he enlarged Ravenna, restored Rome, and save in the matter of military discipline, gave back every other honour to the Romans."[1] He concludes by remarking that had not his numerous virtues, both in peace and war, been stained by certain cruelties towards the end of his life, as for instance by the murder of Boetius and of Symmachus, his memory would be deserving in all respects of the highest honour. "By means of his virtue and goodness, not Rome and Italy alone, but all other parts of the Western Empire being freed from the continual shocks endured for so many years from many barbarian invasions, were now relieved and restored to good order and exceeding prosperity."[2] And hereupon, for the sake of giving added greatness and lustre to the figure of his hero, Machiavelli digresses into an eloquent description of all the woes and calamities, which Italy had endured before Theodoric's time, namely, under Arcadius and Honorius. "Laws, manners, and languages had been changed," he tells us: "many cities destroyed and others founded, any one of the which things, much less all together, or even the mere thought of them, much less the sight and suffering of them, would be enough to terrify even the firmest and most constant mind. . . . Amid so many changes, not the least in importance was the change of religion, since in the conflict between the habits of the old faith and the miracles of the new, very grave tumults and disputes arose among men." "Not only was the old religion at war with the new, but the Christian faith being divided and sub-divided into various sects and Churches, was lacerated internally." "Therefore, being compassed about by so much persecution, men bore their inward terror stamped on their features, since besides the infinite ills they had to endure, the greater number of them—unable even to cast themselves on the mercy of God, in whom all the wretched are accustomed to place their hopes—inasmuch as the majority were uncertain from what Divinity to implore aid, died a miserable death deprived of all succour or consolation. Therefore Theodoric deserved no slight praise, as the first to make all these evils subside, so that during the thirty-eight years of his reign in Italy, he restored it to so much greatness, that no traces of the old sufferings were any longer to

[1] Biondo, having mentioned that Theodoric restored the monuments and institutions of the Romans, goes on to say: "Prohibuit autem edicto et curam impendit attentiorem, ne quis Romanus aut paterna origine Italus, nedum militaret, sed arma domi haberet" (Biondo, *op. cit.* p. 34). We should also note, that this passage of Biondo, partly reproduced, if in a changed form, by Machiavelli, is altogether absent from the compendium by Pius II.

[2] "Opere," vol. i pp. 8, 9

minds of men, stirred by the example of those that were at its head."[1]

And if the will of a Pope was the sole origin of the Crusades, the general and multiple consequences of that mighty event were all reduced, according to Machiavelli, to the institution of the order of the Knights Templars, the Knights of Jerusalem, and a few conquests in the East. "At various times there occurred sundry vicissitudes, in which many nations and special individuals acquired celebrity."[2] This is all that he says.

At this point another consideration presents itself. Not the Crusades only, but all the greatest historical events, have in Machiavelli's eyes none but an individual and personal cause. The Visigoths under Alaric came into Italy through the treason of Stilicho; the Vandals crossed from Spain to Africa at the summons of Bonifacius, of whom Etius had caused the destitution, and they entered Italy at the call of Eudoxia, who sought for revenge; the Longobards came because Narsetes persuaded their king Alboin to essay the new enterprise, and so likewise the Crusades were provoked and started almost by mere caprice on the part of Urban II. The general, impersonal causes and consequences of all these events are altogether absent from Machiavelli's history. If he concerns himself with religion, it must be in the shape of an institution, a Church, or personified in the Pope; he cannot concern himself with the progress of civilization unless it assume the form of law, State, government, or of some great political character. And as in the "Prince" and the "Discourses," he confers unbounded power upon his legislator, making him capable of establishing or destroying a Republic, a monarchy, any kind of government at his own free will, so in this history he regards individual resolve, energy, and intelligence as the sole causes of all the greatest events. And the great men promoting such events are neither formed, inspired, nor endowed with strength by the people; but, on the contrary, it is they who impose their will upon the people, and imbue it with their own ideas. This is the key unlocking to us at the same time the secret both of his historical and political system. It is true that the mediæval legend had already devised similar personal explanations of historical facts. But, to the Middle Ages, man always seemed a blind agent in the hands of Providence, that alike guided peoples and captains, emperors and popes. With the humanists of the fifteenth century, Providence disappeared from the pages of history, and legends were transformed into exclusively personal explanations. There is an abundance of these

[1] "Opere," pp. 27, 28. [2] Ibid., p. 28.

ation of the work he had begun at his request. Fortunately, the temper of the times was favourable to him, since it granted ample liberty of thought and speech on all similar topics And, in fact, Clement VII. was by no means offended by the freedom and severity of his language.

At any rate, Machiavelli continued his narrative in the same relentless tone, relating how the Franks came when summoned, and made the famous concessions which established the foundation of the temporal power of the Popes. Charlemagne was consecrated Emperor by the Lord's anointed, to whom he had given fresh power over the earth. On his death, the empire, being first divided among his sons, was transferred to Germany, and Italy traversed a period of the utmost disorder, during which various attempts were made to create a national monarchy. These attempts, however, were not only abortive, but ended by subjecting Italy to the sway of the Othos, under whose rule, at a later date, the Communes began to arise. Meanwhile, the Popes, always faithful to their traditions, always covetous of authority and power, first deprived the Roman people of their right of acclaiming the Emperor, then of that of electing the Head of the Church, and finally set them the example of deposing an emperor. Thereupon some sided with the Empire, others with the Papacy, "thus sowing the seed of the Guelph and Ghibelline humours, so that, as soon as Italy were freed from barbarian invasions, it might be torn by internal struggles."[1]

In treating of the mighty conflict between the Papacy and the Empire, begun by Emperor Henry II. and Pope Alexander II, and continued under Gregory VII, Machiavelli supplies hardly any details; he does not even mention the great Pope by name, but dilates in general terms upon the haughtiness, pertinacity, and good fortune of the popes; and how, after the humiliation inflicted by them on the Emperor at Canossa, they found new allies in the Normans, who had founded the kingdom of Naples, and were very obsequious to the Church. The popes, however, he says, were not satisfied even then, but always scheming new undertakings. Urban II., being detested in Rome, and not deeming that the divisions of Italy sufficiently ensured his safety, had recourse to a noble idea. He went to France to preach a crusade against the Infidels, and so greatly inflamed the minds of men, that the campaign in Asia against the Saracens was decreed, "and many kings and many peoples helped on the enterprise with gold, and many private individuals fought in it without any recompense. So great was then the power of religion over the

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p. 25.

(1277–81) was the first to inaugurate nepotism, and his successors quickly exceeded all bounds even in that.

"Hence, just as in these former times there has never been any mention of the nephews or kinsmen of any pontiff, so from this time forward history will be found to be so crowded with them that we shall soon have to speak of the sons of popes, for indeed but one thing now remains for these latter to attempt, namely, that after having hitherto sought to bequeath princedoms to their sons, they should now seek in future to leave them heirs to the Papacy."[1]

Soon, their ambition swelled to such enormous dimensions, that Boniface VIII. turned his spiritual as well as temporal weapons against his enemies the Colonna. "The which, while working some injury to them (the Colonna), wrought far more to the Church, since those weapons once virtuously employed in the cause of faith, began to lose their edge, when turned against Christians from motives of personal ambition. And thus from undue craving to satisfy their appetites the pontiffs gradually found themselves stripped of their arms."[2]

Other political events, even when of serious importance, as for example, the Sicilian Vespers, the strife of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, and the vicissitudes of the kingdom of Naples, are barely touched upon, while there is continual mention of every fact in any way tending to justify the political sympathies or antipathies of the author, or to support his theories. We are thus shown with increasing clearness, that Machiavelli aimed at no objective arrangement of facts in accordance with their intrinsic value, and certainly achieved none. On the contrary, his constant object was to find in history the corroboration of his own scheme of politics; and this was no very difficult task, seeing that he had first derived it from history, and was not over scrupulous as to exactness of detail. He passes very lightly over the Italian journey of Henry VII. and the numerous consequences resulting therefrom, and indulges in a far longer description of the perfidious wiles and stratagems by which the Visconti, and Matteo in particular, gained possession of Milan and expelled the Della Torre. He gives his own colouring to these events, in which he again traces the arts of the adventurer-prince, a theme of which he is never weary. Farther on, after the recital of other occurrences, Machiavelli, without any apparent motive, suddenly goes a long way back, to describe the origin of Venice. He then meets with another personage demanding his attention, and this is the tribune Cola di Rienzo, who, had he ended as he

[1] "Opere," vol. i p 39. [2] Ibid., vol 1. p. 40.

in the work of Biondo that Machiavelli had under his eyes; but it was the latter's part to weave them together into a regular system of history, to serve as the basis of his political system. Both therefore are derived from the same source, namely, from the same method of regarding mankind and society: they almost constitute the two aspects in which his conception appears to us, according to our point of view. Like his political writings, his history has but little to tell us either of manners, letters, arts, commerce, or religion. It treats only of conquerors and conquered, of the means by which victory is secured, and of the causes leading to defeat; but most of all it treats of States and their founders, of those that alter and those that destroy them. All other problems, activities, and considerations are almost indifferent to him.

Carrying on his narrative, Machiavelli touches very lightly upon the conflict of the Communes with Frederic Barbarossa, and on the assistance then furnished them by the Pope. On the other hand he devotes more space to an account of the reprimand inflicted by Pope Alexander III. on King Henry of England, "a reprimand to which no private person of our own time would consent to submit."[1] He then recurs to the subject of the accustomed wiles of the popes, relating how, on the extinction of the Norman line in Naples, being unable to seize the kingdom for themselves, they caused it to be occupied by the Hohenstauffen. And after speaking of Frederic II., without saying a word of the important part played by him as a promoter of culture, he dwells upon the fact that the popes, with their constant restlessness and jealousy, summoned Charles of Anjou to make war upon that emperor's descendants, and gave him the investiture of the kingdom. But when Charles, after his victories in the field, was also made a Roman Senator, they found his power too great, and quickly stirred the Emperor Rudolph to arms against him.

"In this way the pontiffs, now in the cause of religion, now in that of their own ambition, never desisted from exciting fresh feuds in Italy and arousing new wars; and no sooner did they establish the power of any prince, than they repented of it and sought to compass his downfall, nor would they permit that any province which they were too weak to seize, should be possessed by another. And princes trembled, for, whether by fight or flight, the popes were always the victors."[2] The popes degenerated in all things, owing to their immoderate ambition. Nicholas III.

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p. 31. [2] Ibid, vol. i. p 37.

the commencement."[1] And he then begins his second book, which is actually the first of the history of Florence.

To sum up: Italy after being overrun by barbarians, owing to the decline of the Empire and the crime of those who from jealousy or motives of personal hatred had invoked foreign help, enjoyed a brief interval of peace and happiness when the wise prince Theodoric succeeded in binding it into a single State.

Upon his death, however, all future attempts failed to keep the country united, chiefly by fault of the popes, who, to augment their own power, sought to keep it divided, and were always summoning fresh barbarians and fresh foreigners to lacerate and trample upon it. From the same cause all the endeavours of the Communes to deliver it were vain, and equally vain the efforts of other princes to keep it united. Finally Communes and princes alike fell into the hands of the mercenary armies, that accomplished both their ruin and that of the whole country, which was now exposed to the blows of all who cared to strike; wherefore, with the entry of Charles VIII., the series of invasions and calamities began afresh. Such is the conception of the first book of the "Storie," a conception that naturally leads to another. The sole remedy for these evils is the institution of a national army under the rule of a prince able to organize and command his troops, and to use them for the defence and unity of the country, by abasing the power of the Papacy, emancipating and fortifying the State, and leaving at his death a legacy of good laws and civil institutions towards the establishment of liberty. He who shall accomplish this will be worthy of a place with the gods.

It is now time to see what Machiavelli has to tell us of the history of Florence, in the three following books.

[1] "Opere," vol. i pp. 59-69.

had begun, would have been another of his most dearly admired characters. In fact, he at first speaks of him with enthusiasm, but quickly turns aside in contempt, on seeing him forsake, without any reason, his glorious and promising enterprise of the re-constitution of the Roman republic.[1] He then proceeds to describe the disorders of Italy; the schism in the Church; the removal of the papal seat to Avignon and its restoration to Rome; the Councils of Pisa and Constance; the ambitious designs of the Visconti, especially of Giovanni Galeazzo; the strange vicissitudes of Giovanna II. of Naples; the military enterprises of Sforza, Braccio di Montone, and the other Italian condottieri, who, from this moment, as Machiavelli tells us, were the destruction of the national arms.

He finally concludes by a sweeping glance at the political conditions of Italy at the beginning of the fifteenth century. After enumerating all the different States and potentates which kept it divided, he winds up with these words: "All these leading potentates were without forces of their own. Duke Philip,[2] locked in his private chambers, and admitting no one to his presence, carried on his campaigns by means of his commissaries. The Venetians, as they turned their attention to the mainland, stripped themselves of the arms which had won them glory by sea, and, following the fashion of other Italians, administered their States by government at second-hand. The Pope not being well able to carry arms, by reason of his frock and Queen Joan of Naples, by reason of her sex, did from necessity that which the rest had done by evil choice. Even the Florentines were subject to the same needs, for having extinguished their nobility, through their frequent dissensions, and their republic having fallen into the hands of traders, they followed the rule and fortune of others."

"The armies of Italy therefore had become mercenary, and confided to *condottieri*, who made a business of fighting, and being all connected by common interests, reduced war to a game in which no one was victor." "Indeed at last they brought it to such utter degradation, that any mediocre captain endowed with the faintest spark of the ancient valour, might have disgraced them all, to the admiration of the whole of Italy, who now by her own foolishness held them all in honour. Therefore, of these slothful princes and most despicable armies my history will be full, but before coming down to that part of it, I must go back to recount the origin of Florence, according to the promise made by me at

[1] "Opere," vol. i p. 49.

[2] Filippo Maria Visconti.

Buondelmonti tragedy,[1] the revolutions and reforms of 1250,[2] 1267,[3] and 1280,[4] the circumstances relating to Giano della Bella, and the Decrees of Justice of 1293,[5] at once proves that Machiavelli always adhered to his original authority. This is confirmed more than once by the very blunders that he makes, sometimes by the fault of Villani, sometimes by failing to give a faithful interpretation of the latter's meaning. Absorbed in his new conception, and therefore in his proposed new arrangement of Florentine history, he proceeded with a certain haste, without too scrupulously weighing the exactness of minute particulars, dwelling much upon events suited to his purpose, while often neglecting others of genuine importance. And by compressing into so small a compass the numerous events scattered through the different chapters of the chronicle, he sometimes assigns to a single year incidents which had occurred at distant intervals, and is occasionally inaccurate as to the number of councils, and the nature of institutions, especially in cases where Villani employs a political terminology, of which the precise significance was beginning to be lost in the sixteenth century.

After a few general remarks upon colonies, Machiavelli tells us that Florence descended from the Etruscan city of Fiesole, whose merchants forsook the hill and established themselves on the banks of the Arno, where Roman colonists enlarged the infant town, which afterwards conquered Fiesole. Having said this, he quickly leaps to the year 1215, and tells the story of Buondelmonti, the incident to which, as we have said, he attributes the origin of the Guelphs and Ghibellines in Florence. And he never perceives that, in the preceding chapters, Villani had described a series of contests between the Florentine Commune and the barons of the rural district outside—ending by the subjection of the latter, and their enforced residence within the city—that, chiefly owing to the Uberti, led to the origin of civil war long before the year 1215. But no sooner, with another long stride to 1250, does Machiavelli begin the narrative of less remote and less obscure events, than he launches a couple of remarks throwing an unexpected light on the history of the internal revolutions of Florence. He discerns that the Ghibellines were not

[1] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 66–68; Villani, "Cronica," bk. v. chaps. xxxviii and xxxix Even the catalogue of Guelph and Ghibelline families is identical in both writers.

[2] "Opere," vol. i. p. 69; Villani, "Cronica," bk. vi. chap xxix.

[3] "Opere," vol. i. p. 76; Villani, "Cronica," bk. vii. chaps. xvi, xvii.

[4] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 77, 78; Villani, "Cronica," bk. vii. chap lxxix.

[5] "Opere," vol. i pp 79–86; Villani, "Cronica," bk. vii. chaps viii., xii., xxvi, xxxviii., xxxix.



CHAPTER XIII.

The "Istorie Fiorentine"—Bks. ii., iii., and iv. on the domestic history of Florence down to the triumph of the Medici.



THE second book opens with the foundation of Florence, to which only a few words are devoted, and then passing on to the year 1215, relates the Buondelmonti tragedy, to which it attributes the division of the city into the Guelph and Ghibelline factions. The intervening years between 1215 and 1250 are passed over in silence, for like Aretino, Machiavelli only starts with a consecutive narrative of Florentine history from the latter year, and carries it down, in this second book, to 1348. He thus compresses into the space of eighty pages the whole vast period forming the subject of the lengthy chronicles of Giovanni Villani. He makes perpetual use of this author, but only once mentions his name together with that of Dante Alighieri.[1] But he makes use of him in a way very dissimilar from his previous treatment of Flavio Biondo's work. He puts aside all the fabulous traditions recorded by Villani on the origin of Florence; all the numerous chapters devoted to general European history, and even those treating of the external wars of the Republic. On the other hand, he details every account of internal divisions, revolutions, and civil reforms, and arranges them in his own way. Comparison of the narratives given by the two writers of the

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p. 63.

By this constitution, continues Machiavelli, liberty was established, the people armed, and the Republic extended its territories.[1] But the rise of Manfred, after the death of Frederic II., restored the courage and strength of the Ghibellines, who rose in revolt, and though at first defeated in the city, overcame the Guelphs at Montaperti (1260), returned in triumph and finally possessed themselves of the government, which was thus again wrested from the people and given up to the nobility. Until this moment the history of the Florentine factions had been chiefly dependent on the course of general events in Italy; but henceforward the influence of internal causes began to prevail, and Machiavelli was the first historian to notice this, and record the almost imperceptible beginning of a great transformation in Florentine society. The Ghibelline party was becoming more and more identified with that of the feudal aristocracy; but was waning in strength and numbers before the rapid growth of the people that now went to swell the ranks of the Guelphs. The nobles, aware of the gravity of this fact, tried to effect a compromise; but this only hastened their downfall, and later on brought about a total change of parties in Florence. Accordingly, the Ghibellines, although still masters of the government, tried to win popular favour, by aiding the formation of the Greater and Lesser Guilds. But this was not sufficient. The Emperor's absence, the great diminution of his power in Italy, and the triumph of the Angevins in Naples, finally had the effect of throwing the city entirely into the hands of the working classes, who placed the Priors of the Guilds at the head of the government in 1282. Villani, failing to grasp the true significance and value of the new magistrature, merely remarks that its title was derived from the gospel, where Christ exhorts the apostles, saying: *Vos estis priores.* But Machiavelli, who looked to the root

(July, 1866); "La Costituzione del Primo Popolo e delle Arti Maggiori" (December, 1866). In particular, see note at p. 676, vol. ii. of 1866.

[1] It seems that although Machiavelli now consulted Villani almost as his only authority, he still gave an occasional glance to Flavio Biondo. In fact, when speaking of the new constitution, he says: "By these civil and military institutions the Florentines founded their freedom. Nor can it be imagined how much authority and power Florence acquired in a short space of time, and not only became the chief power in Tuscany, but was counted among the first cities of Italy, and would have risen to the highest grandeur, but for the affliction of frequent and ever new divisions" ("Opere," vol. i. p. 70). And Flavio Biondo, at p. 299 of his work, after describing the same reform, remarks: "Crevitque mirum in modum, sub ea libertate populi florentini, simul cum potentatu audacia, adeo ut finitimos Hetruriæ populos contraria sentientes, aut fœderibus sibi coniungere, aut viribus domare cœperit."

only the imperial party, but the party of the aristocrats and the men of influence, whereas the Guelphs were the party of the Church and the populace. Consequently, the divisions and revolutions of Florence were defined and regulated by two different orders of causes and effects, namely, some internal and others external. On the one hand, the vicissitudes of the Empire and the Church, of the Suabians and Angevins of Naples; on the other, the natural antipathies between nobles and people in the cities, and the increase of labour and commerce that gave strength to the latter, while the withdrawal to a distance and the weakness of the Empire lessened the power of the former; these were the determining causes of Florentine parties and factions. When Frederic II.'s power was in the ascendant, he immediately favoured the Uberti, chiefs of the Ghibellines, and the Guelphs were expelled. When Frederic II. died (1250), the burghers, who were Guelphs, became masters of the city, and established a new and more democratic government by means of the so-called *Costituzione del Primo Popolo.*

Machiavelli gives an enthusiastic description of this popular constitution, but in so doing, falls into many serious mistakes. He believes the constitution to have been formed by means of an agreement between the Guelphs and the Ghibellines, whereas it was made by the former to the injury of the latter, and especially of the nobles. He believes it to have been the first free constitution in Florence, stating that the Florentines "now thought the moment arrived to assume a form of free government," and never mentions the preceding government by means of Consuls, and the institution of a Podestà, established in 1207 according to the chroniclers, and earlier still according to the documents of the time. What is still worse: he assigns to the same year of 1250 the creation of a Captain of the people and that of a Podestà, and merely styles them two foreign judges for civil and criminal cases. In fact, only the Captain of the people was created in that year as the defender of the popular interests in opposition to the Podestà, who was of older origin, of gentle blood, and sided with the nobility. Both officers were more than mere judges; they had likewise political and military functions; they were assisted by two Councils; in the camp they commanded the armies of the people and the Commune. And, just to mass everything together, Machiavelli attributes to the same year the institution of the Florentine Carroccio, really dating from a much earlier period.[1]

[1] We have treated this question in two articles published in the "Politecnico" of Milan: "Le prime origini e le prime istituzioni della repubblica fiorentina"

(1342), when summoned by the Florentines to rule over them and be their commander in the campaign they had undertaken against the Tuscan Ghibellines. Owing to their incessant disputes, the citizens had come to such a point that "they were unable to preserve liberty, and could not tolerate slavery." The Duke immediately became an armed tyrant, a new "Prince," and, as was only natural, Machiavelli gives a minute description of him, and an eloquent and dramatic version of the well-known tale. He takes his facts from Villani, but adds considerations, descriptions, and speeches of his own, and by the increased force and impressiveness of his style, we are speedily made aware that he has lighted upon a sympathetic theme. Indeed, he even forgets the limits that should have been imposed upon him by the general proportions of his work, and gives way to his propensity to indulge in reflections, invent speeches, and recount episodes vastly enhancing the attractions of the great historico-political picture that he places before his readers.

At the moment when the Duke is at last firmly established as master of the city, and it is plain that he intends to become an absolute tyrant, by obtaining the popular support, Machiavelli brings the Signory before him and puts a very singular and eloquent speech in their mouths. "You seek," they say to the Duke, "to enslave a city that has always lived in freedom. . . . Have you considered all that this implies to such a city, how mighty is the name of liberty, a name that no force can overcome, no time consume, no merit counterbalance? . . . In the midst of universal hatred no safety is possible, for you cannot know whence the danger may come, and he who fears all men can feel assured of none. And should you seek to do so, you plunge into deeper perils, because then the hatred of others burns yet more fiercely and they are better prepared for revenge. That time cannot consume the thirst for liberty is most certain, since it frequently occurs in a city, that this thirst is felt by those who have never tasted liberty, and only hold it dear for the memory of it bequeathed to them by their fathers. . . . And even where their fathers have not reminded them of it, the public buildings, the palaces of the magistrates, the signs and tokens of free institutions, recall it to their minds, the which things are known and greatly prized by the citizens. What deeds of yours, think you, can outweigh the sweets of freedom, or make men cease to yearn after the present condition of things? Not even could you subject the whole of Tuscany to this government, and return to this city every day from triumphant conflict with our foes; forasmuch as all such glory would not be the city's, but your own, and the

of the matter, without discussing the origin of its name, makes instead the following just observation : "This magistrature was the cause, as was presently perceived, of the downfall of the nobles, since on various pretexts they were kept excluded from it by the people, and then mercilessly oppressed."[1]

After dismissing the battle of Campaldino (1289), as that of Montaperti, in two or three words, Machiavelli passes on to the successive internal revolutions brought to a climax by the events of 1293, which were in fact their logical consequence. The Ghibellines were then so thoroughly crushed by the people, that they had almost entirely disappeared. "Nevertheless, all the bad blood found to be seething in every city between the great ones who seek to rule, and the people, that wishes to live according to the laws, was still very heated. The new factions did not come to light so long as the Ghibellines excited alarm ; but as soon as the latter were conquered the former instantly began to assert their strength. No day passed without some injury done to a man of the people ; and the laws were insufficient to avenge him, for the *Grandi*, with the aid of kinsfolk and friends, resisted the authority of the Priors and the Captain."[2] Thus evil passions went on increasing until Giano della Bella achieved the establishment of the *Ordinamenti di Giustizia* (1293), by which even the *Grandi* were excluded from the Signory and overthrown. "After which the people triumphed completely, and the city became very prosperous, being full of men of wealth and reputation."[3]

We see, then, that the Ghibellines rose to power with the aid of the Empire, but were afterwards defeated by the Guelphs, who then splitting into *Grandi* and *popolani*, the latter faction overcame and destroyed the first. The whole of this period of Florentine history is a slow but unceasing progression towards the final triumph of democracy.

But this triumph by no means put a stop to dissensions ; on the contrary, it marked the commencement of a transitional phase of party leaders, personal rivalries and fresh intestine quarrels, leading to the tyranny of the Duke of Athens. This was really a most remarkable episode of Florentine history, and is treated by Machiavelli at such length and with so much care, as to be altogether the principal theme of the second book of his "Storie" He first describes to us the ambitious temper of Corso Donati, the disturber of the Republic ; then the wars against Uguccione della Faggiuola and Castruccio Castracani, of which he gives a far more faithful narrative than in his fantastic "Vita di Castruccio" ; and finally dwells minutely on the coming of the Duke of Athens

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p 78 [2] Ibid , vol i p 79 [3] Ibid , vol. i p 84

outbreak of popular fury, which first drove away the tyrant, and then vented itself upon his trustiest followers and supporters, particularly on the *Conservator* Guglielmo d'Assisi and his youthful son aged eighteen years.[1] "Enmities seem fiercer, wounds deeper, on the recovery of liberty than during its defence. Messer Guglielmo and his son were surrounded by thousands of their enemies, and the son had not yet completed his eighteenth year. Nevertheless, neither youth, innocence, nor beauty availed to save him from the fury of the multitude; and those who could not wound the victims while still breathing, stabbed them after they were dead, and, still unsatiated with tormenting them, slashed the corpses with their weapons, and tore them tooth and nail. And in order that every sense might be sated with vengeance, after having first listened to their groans, seen their wounds, and touched their lacerated flesh, they proceeded to taste them, so that their own internal parts might be satisfied equally with their external organs"[2] Even these concluding particulars are taken from Villani with very slight alterations; but no one but Machiavelli could have discovered so excellent a style, especially in the expression of hatred for tyranny and of the love of liberty.

The Duke expelled, and his most trusted followers put to death, after other riots and tumults, the Decrees of Justice were once more enforced, and the nobles again totally excluded from the government, which reverted to the people. The nobles being now completely crushed, sought, by changing their names, to be confused with the people, against whom they no longer dared to take arms, "and, indeed, became continually meeker and more abject. Whereby Florence was not only stripped of arms, but likewise of all generosity."[3] Here it is worthy of note that Machiavelli, who so earnestly desired the triumph of democracy, and so greatly hated the aristocracy, nevertheless saw and frankly acknowledged that the latter's fall led to the decline of arms in the Italian Communes, and the subsequent reliance upon mercenary captains, who, as will be shown in the following books, proved the ruin of the national liberty, independence, and strength.

Thus the second book of the "Istorie" has many gaps, many inaccuracies; neglects all mention of the external affairs of the Republic, dwells with undue length upon certain internal events, while passing too lightly over others; and being compiled from Villani's "Chronicle," is entirely wanting in original research. Yet even putting aside its principal episode, that of the Duke of

[1] "Opere," vol. i p 121 and fol.; Villani, "Cronica," vol. iv. bk xii chaps. xv.-xviii [2] "Opere," vol. i. p. 129. [3] Ibid., vol. i. p 137.

citizens would not gain subjects, but fellow-slaves, by whose means they would be plunged more deeply in slavery. And however holy might be your life, however benignant your manners, righteous your judgments, all this could not suffice to make you beloved. And did you deem them to suffice, you would be deluded, for to one accustomed to live unshackled, every chain is heavy and every bond galls."[1] This is how the Signory warn the Duke that his desire to establish a tyranny is urging him to certain destruction.

As is well known, Machiavelli was not the first to interpolate long speeches into historical writings. In imitation of the ancients, the Humanists had for some time adopted, and often abused, this practice. But the historians of old remained both eloquent and truthful, while giving us wholly imaginary discourses, for they made the Greeks and Romans speak in accordance with their genuine modes of thought. The Humanists, on the contrary, by their endeavour to make Italians of the Middle Ages and the fifteenth century converse like Romans, achieved nothing beyond paltry displays of rhetoric. The same defect is also to be found in many historians of the Cinquecento.

Nevertheless, the discourses of Guicciardini and Machiavelli demand a different estimate The former sometimes puts into the mouths of his personages words really uttered by them ; more frequently, however, he makes them explain the real causes, bearings, and consequences of the actual facts. And accordingly his speeches have a great and positive value, although not always free from rhetorical flourish. On the other hand, Machiavelli's speakers, although equally fictitious, exhibit the author's own feelings and reflections with regard to historical events, and are therefore always profound, always most eloquent, although when we remember the supposed speakers, we are struck by the amount of anachronism and improbability. Who could believe, for instance, that the Florentine Signory would have ventured to show so bold a front in addressing the soldier Duke who was already lord of their city, or to manifest so profound a love of liberty? Yet their speech is extremely eloquent, because it expresses all that the circumstances suggested and inspired to Machiavelli, who, being kindled by his own narrative, is himself the actual orator, and speaks with profound earnestness

After this, and following Villani's lead, he continues the tale of the Duke's tyranny; of the hatred it aroused in the people; of the three conspiracies simultaneously woven by three different classes of citizens, and at last gives a most lively description of the fierce

[1] "Opere," vol. i pp 118-120.

Revolt of the Ciompi (1378), when popular excesses sowed the seed of the future power of the Medici, who for that very reason had been the secret helpers and fomenters of that great riot. Machiavelli relies, in his account, on the contemporary history of the event written by Gino Capponi. But, as this was incomplete, he is obliged towards the end to again revert to Marchionne di Coppo Stefani. Farther on in this book, he refers also to other writers; but it is difficult to identify them all, since at this point the narrative proceeds very swiftly. He is most cautious in the choice of authorities; his favourite authors are always the best and most trustworthy as regards the facts for which he refers to them. But this does not always prevent him from making a very arbitrary use of them, especially whenever he wishes to enforce any of his own pet ideas or political theories.

Every book of Machiavelli's history is prefaced by a few general reflections In the first he starts with some brief remarks on the migrations and incursions of the Germanic tribes; in the second he treats of the planting of colonies. The third and following books are prefaced by set introductions, each of which, in clear and precise terms, propounds some historico-political problem that is demonstrated in the subsequent narration. And these are precious, not only for their intrinsic value, but because they teach us how, to Machiavelli's eyes, history became transmuted into political science. We often see this science spring into life, as it were, beneath our gaze. "It is by natural enmities between the people and the nobility," so begins the third book, "that cities are divided and convulsed. Such enmities kept Rome and Florence divided, though in diverse fashion; for whereas in Rome they were manifested by disputes, and quieted by a law framed for the good of the public, in Florence, on the contrary, they began by combats, were exasperated by the banishment and execution of many citizens, and were ended by some decree conceived solely to the advantage of the victors. Roman dissensions, by bringing the people in nearer contact with the nobles, fostered military valour; those of Florence extinguished it, by destroying the nobles. All this occurred because the Roman people only wished to share with the patricians in governing the affairs of the State; but the people of Florence, on the contrary, wished to exclude the nobles in order to have the sole command. The desire of the former people was just, and the Roman patricians gave way; the latter was unjust, and the Florentine nobility was obliged to resist. Thus there was fighting, banishment, bloodshed, and the laws were unjust, partial, and cruel. The nobles were forced to change

Athens, recounted with such vigorous and splendid eloquence, this second book is still one of our masterpieces of historical literature. For in it Machiavelli, with eagle-like penetration, brings into unity the history of more than a hundred years. Events which, although clearly narrated, are disconnected in Villani, and scattered as at random over his pages; the string of revolutions, the continual fresh disorders and new political institutions, which according to all the chroniclers, and even the historians, seem entirely at the mercy of chance, solely caused by brutal hatreds and ferocious passions, are here all marvellously brought into logical connection and for the first time converted into genuine history. For Machiavelli discerned that all these revolutions arose from the same cause, had a single aim, towards which they incessantly urged the Republic until it touched the predestined goal. It was a question of the sanguinary struggle between the people, in whose veins ran Latin blood, and the feudal aristocracy, which was of Germanic origin, and foreign to Italy. This struggle ended by the total destruction, first of the feudal lords, and then of the nobles known as the *Grandi*, that took place in 1293, and was still more effectually completed after the expulsion of the Duke of Athens. Thus, all the Florentine revolutions and institutions were not only connected together, but followed one another as though evolved from one and the same idea. In this way, through Machiavelli's critical analysis, this most confused and intricate history suddenly acquires the self-evidence of a geometrical proposition. The darkness has been dispersed by the electric light of his mighty intellect, and the most marvellous order introduced into the chaos bequeathed to us by the chroniclers. The whole secret of Florentine history is contained in this second book. And here it may be truly affirmed that no one has ever succeeded in doing better than he, and that the many writers who, even in after years, proved unable to follow the course he had marked out, always missed their aim, and relapsed into disorder and confusion.

The third book goes from the year 1353 to 1414, and is compiled from three different authors. Down to 1378 Machiavelli uses the "Istoria Fiorentina" of Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, in the same way that he had used Villani, namely, by dwelling solely on passages relating to the internal struggles of the Republic and its political reforms. The special theme of this book is the exposition of the manner in which the multiplication of parties leads to the dissolution of the State, inasmuch as parties corrupt the city, and by the destroyal of liberty prepare the way for tyranny. Accordingly, the principal episode is that of the

the *popolo grasso*, or substantial traders of the Greater Guilds, the *popolo minuto*, or petty traders and artisans of the Lesser Guilds, and the populace. Arms having declined, all wars had to be carried on by the Companies of Adventure, who only fought for hire. In this condition of things the family of the Albizzi and other well-to-do burghers began to come to the front and gain influence in the city, no longer by force and violence, but by means of what were then called civil methods—*modi civili*—namely, by gaining possession of political offices, and by persecuting and banishing their adversaries as Ghibellines, although that party had ceased to exist.

There was great disorder, in short, and Machiavelli, for its better description and the more forcible rendering of his own general reflections on the causes and course of parties, his grief at the spectacle of his country's decay, and the insecurity of liberty in Florence and the whole of Italy, brings some citizens before the Signory and makes them pronounce the following words: "The cities of Italy are teeming with all things capable of receiving or dealing corruption. The young are slothful, the old vicious, and either sex and every age is consumed by evil customs which good laws, being enfeebled by abuses, are powerless to cure. Consequently, decrees and laws are now made for private instead of public interests. Hence wars and treaties of peace and alliance are ordained, not for the general glory, but for the satisfaction of the few. And of all cities torn by similar divisions, our own is certainly the worst. Wherefore it ensues that no sooner is this faction expelled, and that division quelled, than another arises; for when a city seeks to maintain itself by sects rather than by laws, no sooner has one sect vanquished all opposition, than of necessity that sect becomes divided against itself." "It was, for instance, believed that when the Ghibellines were destroyed, the Guelphs would long remain prosperous; but, on the contrary, they split into the *Bianchi* and the *Neri*. The Bianchi being vanquished, fresh quarrels arose from the dissensions between the people and the aristocrats. And, thereupon, in order to give to others that which we did not know how to preserve for ourselves, we yielded our liberty now to King Robert, now to his brother, then to his son, and finally to the Duke of Athens. But, as we were never agreed either to live in freedom, or exist in slavery, we drove away the Duke of Athens, whose sour and tyrannical soul had after all failed to give us wisdom, or teach us how to live. For, in fact, we quarrelled among ourselves more than before, until the old nobility was conquered, and we had to be at the mercy of the people. It was thought that all

their names, armorial bearings, and habits, and to mix with the people, so that the military valour and highmindedness appertaining to the aristocracy were extinguished, and could not be rekindled in the people who had it not; consequently, Florence became more and more humiliated and abject.[1]

This comparison with Rome, also so frequently repeated in the "Discourses," is undoubtedly somewhat strained. Machiavelli omits to notice that the Florentine aristocracy was feudal and of foreign origin, but not so the Roman; he is guilty of considerable exaggeration when he says that in Rome the struggles between the people and patricians were always peaceful, and forgets how they led to an equality that later became the basis of Cæsarism. For in reality he establishes a comparison between the real history of Florence and a somewhat imaginary history of Rome, to which he attributes all the qualities he wished to discover in his political ideal. Nevertheless, all that he says of Florence is very true, and the result of keen observation, and his reflections with regard to the parallel drawn by him are also of much intrinsic value. They strangely resemble what has since been asserted by great modern writers, when comparing the political history of France with that of England. The English aristocracy, by joining with the middle class in the government of the country, gained a fresh increment of vigour and vitality; the French aristocracy, by separating itself entirely from the middle class and the people, obtained destruction at the hands of the triumphant democracy. England, therefore, made steady progress, had a strong, well-regulated, and liberal government; whereas France underwent continual revolutions, and attained to a great equality, in which all forms of government were possible and all were experimented. This is not very different from the views expressed by Machiavelli at the close of the introduction to his third book, where he says that: "Florence has reached such a stage, that a skilful legislator might easily mould it to any form of government."[2]

The Duke of Athens had roused the populace and utilized its support in order to establish his tyranny. Accordingly, after his expulsion, party struggles were complicated by the introduction of a novel order of citizens forming a new element of discord. In fact, Florence was now the scene of perpetual conflict between

[1] For the better comprehension of the whole of this introduction, of which several passages are somewhat obscure, it will be useful to compare it with the concluding portion of chap ii of bk. i of Machiavelli's "Discourses." "Opere," vol. iii. pp. 18, 19.

[2] "Opere," vol i p 141.

The acquisition of power on the part of the Albizzi and the "fat burghers" was caused by the fact that the wealthy merchants at the head of the vast trade and commerce of Florence, were the only persons interested in carrying on the external wars of the Republic. For in this way they could increase the power of the State while guarding the freedom of traffic, by which they accumulated their own riches and those of their city. Accordingly, they were always willing to make all needful sacrifices. They heaped taxes upon themselves as well as upon others, nor were they over scrupulous, on emergency, as to restricting the public liberties. The lesser arts, on the contrary, who earned their bread by petty industries, and petty internal traffic, were eager for peace and for a public luxury, indispensable to their own well-being; they desired fewer taxes, greater privileges, and at least some share in the management of the State. Consequently, it was always seen that the *popolo grasso* triumphed in time of war, and the *popolo minuto* in time of peace. And thus, no sooner was the war against the Pope ended, than complaints ensued as to the expenses incurred, the burdens imposed. Therefore the Albizzi lost favour; the *popolo minuto* on the other hand gained ground, and began to seek for leaders One of much skill was speedily discovered in Salvestro dei Medici, who, although belonging to the richer class, became from that moment the champion of the interests of the *popolo minuto*, and thus, with infinite sagacity, began to prepare the way for the supremacy of his own family. Machiavelli was the first historian to date the origin of the Medicean rule from this remote moment, and to clearly define the character of their very astute and fortunate policy.

On being chosen Gonfalonier in 1378, Salvestro opposed the Albizzi, favoured their enemies and the *popolo minuto*, and enforced the Decrees of Justice which had lapsed into disuse. But it was impossible to effect all this without riots, and without these riots giving rise to unexpected consequences. "Let no one," says Machiavelli at this point, "believe that he can make a change in a city, and then check it at his own pleasure, or regulate it after his own conceit."[1] This measure, in fact, proved the beginning of the revolt of the Ciompi, serving to fill a great part of the third book, and related at length by Machiavelli, with the aid of Capponi, and the addition of numerous speeches and reflections of his own.[2] The people and populace, having

[1] "Opere," vol i p 158

[2] "Tumulto dei Ciompi scritto da Gino Capponi," published in the "Cronichette antiche di varii scrittori" Florence, Domenico Maria Manni,

cause of trouble would be ended now that a check had been imposed upon those who had divided the city by their over-bearing pride. It has been seen, on the contrary, how fallacious are human hopes, for the haughtiness and ambition of the aristocrats were not extinguished, but passed on to the plebeians, who now, according to the fashion of the ambitious, seek to obtain the first rank in the Republic, and revive the terms of Guelph and Ghibelline which had been previously abolished. Seek, therefore, to destroy the evil that sickens us, the rage that consumes us, the poison that destroys us, by curbing the ambition of those men, annulling decrees which foster division, and promulgating such as are favourable to true freedom and civil order."[1]

The Signory then elected fifty-six citizens to reform the Republic; but only succeeded in heightening the confusion, because, as Machiavelli had already frequently said, and now repeated, "the mass of men are better fitted to preserve a good government, than to discover one for themselves."[2] Accordingly the Albizzi became more powerful than before, and when Pope Gregory XI. at Avignon declared war against Florence, they assumed the lead of the *popolo grasso*, made all necessary arrangements for the defence, and conducted the campaign with so much energy, that not only were the forces of the Pope repulsed, but the subject cities in his own States stirred to rise in the name of liberty. And the Eight of War, although they had disregarded interdicts, despoiled the churches of their wealth, and compelled the clergy to celebrate the rites of religion, enjoyed the full favour of the people, and were styled the Eight Saints, "so much higher being then the regard of those citizens for their country than for their soul."[3]

[1] "Opere," vol. i. pp 146–151. [2] Ibid., vol. i. p. 151.

[3] Ibid., vol i. p. 153 We have already noted that this expression, also quoted on another occasion by Guicciardini, was first used by Neri di Gino Capponi. The term of "Otto Santi" is not to be found in Stefani, but is, however, repeated by Nardi, "Storia," vol. i. p 7. Down to this portion of the second book, Machiavelli follows the "Istorie Fiorentine" of Marchionne di Coppo Stefani, published in the "Delizie degli Eruditi Toscani" of Padre Ildefonso di San Luigi, vol. vii. and fol. This history is divided in rubrics. To see how and to what extent Machiavelli made use of it, the following passages may be compared: Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. i. pp. 141, 142, and Stefani, rubric 662; Machiavelli, p. 143, and Stefani, rubric 665; Machiavelli, p 144, and Stefani, rubrics 674 and 695; Machiavelli, p 145, and Stefani, rubrics 725 and 726; Machiavelli, p. 151, and Stefani, rubric 732 (here Marchionne Stefani alludes to many reforms which Machiavelli leaves unmentioned); Machiavelli, p. 152, and Stefani, rubric 751; Machiavelli, p. 153, and Stefani, rubrics 751, 760, and 761.

easier to obtain pardon. . . . It is grievous to me to hear that many of you repent in your souls of the deeds you have done, and mean to abstain from committing others. For if that be true, you are certainly not the men I believed you to be, for neither conscience nor infamy ought to have any terror for you; inasmuch as those who conquer, no matter in what way, need never take shame of their victory. And as for conscience, that should not trouble us much, for, knowing what it is to dread hunger and imprisonment, there neither can nor should be room in us for fear of hell."[1]

And now, in the midst of the riot, Machiavelli beholds the fantastic figure of Michele di Lando, who half naked and barefooted mounted the palace stairs with the mob at his heels, and was proclaimed Gonfalonier by the voice of the people. Then to show us that this proletary, whom his imagination exalted, was "sagacious and prudent, and more indebted to nature than to fortune," he gives us an anecdote mainly of his own invention. Accordingly he says that Michele di Lando, finding himself exalted by a populace intoxicated with victory and panting for blood, determined to find a way of dominating it, and preventing the commission of greater excesses. He therefore ordered the arrest of Ser Nuto, who was held in great detestation, and had been destined by the adversaries of the people to fill the office of Bargello. All his companions immediately rushed off, heated with wrath, to hunt for Ser Nuto, and Michele profited by the opportunity. To inaugurate by justice the rule he had acquired by fortune, not only did he prohibit all further burning of houses, but set up a gallows in the Piazza, to show that his threats would be enforced. Meanwhile the crowd came back, dragging Ser Nuto, who was "hung from that gallows by one foot, and some one standing near having knocked a bit off him, all of a sudden there was nothing left of him excepting that foot." According to Machiavelli Michele di Lando had given no direct orders for the murder of Ser Nuto, because it was not necessary to do so. His object in choosing as a victim one so detested that none could wish or be able to save him, was to satiate by this means the popular fury. In fact he thus succeeded in saving the life and property of many citizens, and speedily re-established order and justice.[2]

Unluckily nothing of this is corroborated by history. There is no mention of the killing of Ser Nuto in Capponi's "Tumulto dei Ciompi," for the narrative ceases before that point; but it is

[1] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 165-167.

[2] Ibid., vol. i. pp. 173, 174.

won the first concessions, began to be turbulent, make riots, and continually press fresh demands upon the Signory. No sooner were these granted, than others were urged of a more exorbitant nature, and at last they began to pillage and burn the citizens' houses. Upon this the Gonfalonier Luigi Guicciardini called together the heads of the Guilds and said to them: "We have yielded to your every demand. The magisterial authority has been lessened, new curbs have been put on the nobles, many powerful citizens sent into banishment; we have pardoned those who burnt houses and pillaged churches. Where will your demands end? Do you not see that we show more patience in defeat, than you in victory? What will result to your city from all your divisions?"[1]

And after making the Gonfalonier speak in this wise, Machiavelli assigns to a representative of the people another speech, recalling here and there the language of Catiline in Sallust, and painting with singular eloquence the fierce passions of the unbridled Florentine mob. It shows the strange mixture of heathenism and Christianity peculiar to the Renaissance. "Had we now to decide whether we ought to take arms and burn and sack the citizens' houses, perhaps I, too, would rather vote for quiet poverty than perilous gain. But seeing that we are already in arms, and much mischief has been already done, we must now remain sword in hand, and secure some advantage from the harm committed. If nothing else can teach us, necessity gives us a lesson. The city is full of hatred against us, and new weapons are being forged to strike us. And the sole way to gain forgiveness for our old sins, is by committing others, redoubling our burnings and robberies, and seeking many accomplices in them," "since where many sin, no one is chastised; and small faults are punished, but great and grave ones rewarded. And when many suffer, few seek vengeance, for universal injuries are endured with more patience than private woes. Therefore, by multiplying our crimes, it will be all the

1733 (from p. 219 to 249, of the volume). It is useful to compare Machiavelli, "Opere," vol. i. pp. 156 and 157, with Capponi, p. 220; Machiavelli, p. 158, and Capponi, p. 221; Machiavelli, p. 159, and Capponi, pp. 221, 223, and 225; Machiavelli, p. 160, and Capponi, pp. 223 and 224; Machiavelli, p. 160, and Capponi, p. 233; Machiavelli, p. 170, and Capponi, pp. 234–236, and 238; Machiavelli, p. 171, and Capponi, pp. 237, 239, and 240; Machiavelli, p. 172, and Capponi, p. 243; Machiavelli, p 173, and Capponi, pp 244 and 245; Machiavelli, p. 174, and Capponi, p. 246; Machiavelli, p. 175, and Capponi, p. 246. Capponi's work terminates at the Gonfaloniership of Michele di Lando, so at that point Machiavelli reverts to Marchionne di Coppo Stefani. *Vide* Machiavelli, p. 177, and Stefani, rubric 804; Machiavelli, pp. 178 and 179, and Stefani, rubric 805.

[1] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 161–163.

Machiavelli now falls back upon Marchionne Stefani,[1] and then presently availing himself of Aretino[2] and others, carries his narrative forward to 1414. First of all, he investigates the earliest political results of the revolt, consisting in a reaction against the excessive power of the populace, which was then expelled from the government, and in another triumph of the Trades, in which, however, the Lesser prevailed over the Greater Guilds. The enemies of the Albizzi now rose to power, namely, men such as Giorgio Scali, and above all Salvestro dei Medici, who after secretly fomenting and manipulating the revolt, profited by the reaction that was then setting in no less to the injury of the populace than of the Greater Guilds. He, and not Michele di Lando, had played the astute politician, and his descendants reaped the harvest of this revolution. Machiavelli was the first historian to take account of this fact; but he could not admire a policy of mere subterfuge, and devoid of daring, that, while feigning to support the rights of the people, solely aimed at the destroyal of liberty. Consequently he extolled and idealized the modest and hardy wool-carder, who never thought of abusing his success.

But when the long war began between the Florentines and Giovan Galeazzo Visconti, Count of Virtù, who was lord of Milan and sought to become master of the whole of Italy, the government of Florence again passed into the hands of the Greater Guilds and the Albizzi, who, as usual, conducted the war with admirable energy and patriotism.[3] But they were once more compelled to augment taxation, and keep down the lowest classes, so that the latter's discontent was proportionately great. Hence, no sooner was danger at an end and peace at hand, than the masses rebelled and turned to Messer Vieri dei Medici, who had succeeded to Salvestro, was now the practical head of the city, and also pursued the same policy of expectancy.

The fourth book describes the manner in which the Medici at last contrived to touch the much-desired goal. It starts from the year 1420, thus passing over several years, and goes down to the triumph of Cosimo dei Medici, on his return from exile in 1434. The fact of few noteworthy events having occurred during the

[1] We have already quoted the rubrics in question.

[2] *Vide* Machiavelli, p. 180, and Aretino (Italian edition), p. 478; Machiavelli, p. 182, and Aretino, pp. 484, 489, and 490; Machiavelli, p. 183, and Aretino, p. 490; Machiavelli, p. 184, and Aretino, p. 491; Machiavelli, p. 186, and Aretino, p. 491; Machiavelli, pp. 188, 189, and Aretino, p. 506; Machiavelli, p. 192, and Aretino, p. 556. Here, too, Machiavelli occasionally makes use of other historians, and alludes to it himself at p. 193.

[3] "Opere," vol. i. p. 191.

recorded by other historians, to whom Machiavelli now refers,[1] and attributed by all to a fierce and unpremeditated burst of popular fury, without any suggestion that Michele di Lando was in the least responsible for it. The murder was an actual fact, and it would also seem that the public fury really subsided after its accomplishment. But the orders given by Michele to the people, and his purpose in giving them, are mentioned by none save Machiavelli, and are certainly fictions of his own He was so profoundly persuaded that any man capable of rising to great prominence in revolutions or politics, must necessarily have a drop of Cæsar Borgia's blood in his veins that he discovered it where it had no existence. He tried to convert the plain wool-carder who won a brief popularity, and though really doing more good than harm, had no elements of greatness, into a far-sighted politician and a noble character. He accorded him unbounded admiration, because he regarded him as a defender of popular rights who never attempted to turn personal success to account by establishing a tyranny. And having once begun to paint the man's portrait, he tried to enhance its attractions by colouring it from his own imagination, which was often too ready to behold a Borgia on every side.

Machiavelli pursues his narrative to the end in the same enthusiastic strain. When the mob proceeded to farther excesses, and neither reasoning nor menace availed to restrain it, Michele rushed through the city, sword in hand, with a numerous following of armed men, and quelled the rebels by force. So at last the riots were stopped solely by the valour of the Gonfalonier, who in courage, prudence, and goodness, surpassed every citizen of that period, and deserved to be numbered among the few who have benefited their country, for his goodness forbade him to conceive any thought that should be opposed to the public welfare."[2]

In actual truth Michele di Lando was not only a far less significant personage, but often an involuntary and unwitting instrument in the hands of Salvestro, and in no case could have been able to aspire to absolute rule.[3]

[1] Marchionne di Coppo Stefani mentions it at rubric 795 and Aretino at the beginning of book ix. For further details of the "Tumulto dei Ciompi," *vide* the interesting work with that title published by Prof. Carlo Fossati in vol i of the "Pubblicazioni del R. Istituto di Studii Superiori in Firenze" (Section of Philosophy and Philology), Florence, Le Monnier. In chap. iv. § iii. the author narrates the fate of Ser Nuto, according to authentic accounts edited and inedited, and arrives at the same conclusion as ourselves

[2] "Opere," vol. i. pp 177, 178.

[3] See what is said of him on this subject by Fossati, in the above-quoted work.

he had hitherto neglected. However, in this fourth book he does not enlarge much upon these; only indeed mentions them in order to speak ill of the mercenary leaders, note the influence of the wars upon the factions within the walls of Florence, and the infinite cleverness with which the Medici contrived to turn even the wars to account. He borrows Cavalcanti's description of certain of these campaigns, and gives it a colouring of his own; but he passes many of them over in silence, in order to follow his author much more closely in the narrative of city events. Cavalcanti often indulges in original reflections, expressed in endless speeches, the supposed utterances of his characters. These speeches are high-flown, turgid, and altogether painful reading, but have the merit of containing arguments really enunciated in Florence with reference to the events that happened from day to day. Machiavelli therefore had no scruple as to imitating or copying them in his history; and these bursts of see-saw rhetoric are converted into genuine eloquence by the magic of his pen, just as the lengthy, monotonous narratives of the earlier writer become rapid, forcible, and most vivacious in the hands of his successor. And as to this is added the logical connection of events never to be found in Cavalcanti, it is easy to understand why this fourth book of the "Histories" should have a special and considerable value of its own, although comprising continual plagiarisms such as can only be realized by those who have collated the two authors. Such comparison will likewise show the ease with which a man of genius can change the worst written pages into excellent literary work.

After a brief introduction on the perils incurred by liberty where no good laws place a curb on the excesses of the nobles tending to oppression, or on those of the people tending to licence, Machiavelli observes that the ancients indeed had good laws, but not the Italian republics, and that consequently the latter always ended by requiring the despotic rule of some single individual. "There has been a manifest example of this in Florence, where the parties called into existence by the dissensions of the Albizzi and the Ricci, and so scandalously resuscitated by Messer Salvestro dei Medici, were never extinguished. The deserts of the Albizzi with regard to their country were certainly great; but the family soon became insolent, and were all of them torn by envy one of the other, the which afforded the Medici an opportunity for gradually re-establishing their own authority over the people. Thus, at last, to the great joy of the masses, Giovanni obtained the post of first magistrate. And it was in vain that men wiser than the rest, more especially Niccolò da

intervening years is not the sole reason for this leap. Machiavelli now makes frequent use of a new authority, the "Istorie Fiorentine," of Giovanni Cavalcanti, beginning precisely from 1420.[1] Lack of literary value long condemned this work to oblivion; nevertheless, as a contemporary narrative, it was held to be and is really a trustworthy guide. Accordingly, Machiavelli frequently availed himself of it and to a far greater extent than of any other of his authorities. Sometimes, merely changing the style, he copies him outright.

The Medici now make their first appearance as powerful personages, and Machiavelli shows a desire to turn from the internal affairs of Florence, and dwell instead upon the external wars which

[1] The "Istorie" were intended to go on to 1450, but really broke off in 1440. In another and later work designated by the editor as the "Seconda Storia," Cavalcanti related the events that took place between 1440 and 1447. He was a credulous and fantastic man, with a craze for Platonic philosophy, had little talent, and was a bad writer. He was a great admirer of Cosimo dei Medici, although he sometimes blamed him. The "Istorie Fiorentine" were written during the imprisonment he suffered for omitting to pay his taxes. The work was published by Filippo Polidori in two volumes, with documents in the appendix. Florence, The Dante Press, 1838 and 1839.

In the "Historische Schriften" of Gervinus, this author, after comparing the manuscript histories of Cavalcanti with the printed ones of Machiavelli, censures the Italians for having neglected to publish the former, while wasting their time in the study and publication of literary manuscripts from which they gained nothing but words and phrases for the Cruscan Academy. The reproof was not altogether undeserved, but the German historian might have noted many things on which he was silent. As he had been in Florence, and brought out his work in 1833 in Germany, he should have remembered that long before he had done so, Canon Domenico Moreni, in a "Lettera bibliografica" addressed to Canon Carlo Ciocchi (Florence, Ciardetti, 1803, at pp. 12 and 13), had recommended the publication of Cavalcanti's "Istorie," spoke of them afterwards in his "Bibliografia storico-ragionata della Toscana," and brought out their more important parts in an octavo volume entitled: "Della carcere, dell' ingiusto esilio e del trionfale ritorno di Cosimo Padre della Patria, tratto dalla Istoria fiorentina manoscritta di Giovanni Cavalcanti." Florence, Magheri, 1821. And in the preface to this work (pp. xxvii, xxviii), Moreni even then remarked what Gervinus thought himself the first to discover: "Although, as we have seen, this history is very defective in its diction, no one has as yet noticed that it served as a guide and authority to Machiavelli for his own history. And this can be easily verified by any one, who may wish to do so, without it being necessary for us to cite any passage or example in support of our assertion."

The "Seconda Storia," narrating the events from 1440 to 1447, is of less importance and worse written. Polidori published the greater part of it in the shape of an additional volume. In the appendix he also added some fragments of another work by Cavalcanti, a treatise on politics, or rather on morals, which is quite valueless. The "Seconda Storia" was written out of prison, as the author tells us at the beginning. But after all it is only fair to add that Gervinus's reproofs had some share in promoting the publication in Florence of a good and complete edition of Cavalcanti's "Histories."

Who could believe this speech to be based upon that previously written by Cavalcanti? Yet so it is.[1] Twenty citizens were elected for the imposition of fresh taxes, and they naturally threw the chief burden upon the *popolani grassi*. Accordingly the latter held a meeting in Santo Stefano, where Rinaldo degli Albizzi made them a speech that Cavalcanti has spread over fifteen pages, drowning its propositions in a sea of words, whereas Machiavelli has summarized it in a few graphic sentences. Albizzi declared that it was necessary to restore the government to the *grandi*, and diminish the influence of the Lesser Guilds by reducing them from fourteen to seven.[2] Other speeches followed, and are given by Machiavelli, who still copies them from Cavalcanti. Finally Albizzi was commissioned to win over Giovanni dei Medici to their party; but he refused, alleging that he disliked innovations, and was a friend of the people,[3] the which gained him a great increase of favour in the city. Cavalcanti then devotes five-and-twenty chapters to the external wars that re-established the strength of the Albizzi; but these are left aside by Machiavelli, who merely gives one or two anecdotes concerning them.

After peace was made, dissensions broke out again as usual, and Giovanni dei Medici promoted the law of Catasto, which by indi-

[1] Here is the discourse as it stands in Cavalcanti: "Satiate yourselves then, ye voracious wolves, who would have burst before this had this city been allowed a little rest. You are always exciting fresh wars, unnecessary risks and abominable abuses. You even began the war against the king, reckless both of his rights and of the benefits received from his predecessors. Now take your fill of us, feed yourselves upon our miserable flesh; you have left no other sustenance to ourselves and our families. You always seek quarrels, yet see how you manage your wars. . . . To whom will you have recourse? What help can save you from the strength of your enemies? With what weapons will you defend your ungrateful arrogance? There are no longer sovereigns of Apulia, there is only Madonna Giovannella, whom you have forced into subjection to a barbarous people, by not silencing a vile adventurer. Who now will aid you? Pope Martin whom you so shamelessly allowed to be so insulted by your sons? Do you not know that their songs ran thus: *Papa Martino non vale un quattrino*. and *Braccio valente che vince ogni gente*? You never thought to have need of any man's help It is written that once a lion had need of a mouse. Whither will you fly for safety? Now make your wars, and create the Ten, and say that they inspire fear to the enemy: now carry out all your foolish, ill-considered, motiveless plans" &c. (Cavalcanti, vol. i bk. ii. chap. xxi pp 65-67).

[2] "Opere," vol. i p. 215 As another specimen of Cavalcanti's style, we subjoin the first sentence of his speech: "Great is my rejoicing and greater my comfort, respected soldiers and respectable citizens, to see you in this temple, forming so magnificent a circle about me, and all gazing attentively upon me, for the purpose of augmenting the welfare and honour of our republic" (Cavalcanti, "Storie Fiorentine," vol i. bk. iii. p 74). The discourse continues to p 90, and always in the same style.

[3] "Opere," vol. i pp. 215-217; Cavalcanti, vol. i. bk. iii. chaps. iii. and v.

Uzzano, raised a warning cry that this would prove the beginning of a tyranny."[1]

We are then quickly brought to the war against Filippo Maria Visconti, who aspired to the domination of all Italy. The Albizzi were again at the head of the government, and again showed great energy in the conduct of the war, which, however, was ended in 1424, by the rout of Zagonara[2] Cavalcanti says that the battle "was tremendous and mortal at the beginning," but that from the unskilfulness of their captains, the Florentines were surrounded and put to flight. The commander-in-chief was made prisoner; Lodovico degli Obizzi, one of the captains, was killed; a third was drowned.[3] Furthermore the enemy stripped 3,200 knights of their arms[4] All this would lead to the belief that at least several soldiers as well as captains were killed. But Machiavelli, even with Cavalcanti's pages before him, is eager to take the first opportunity to express his contempt for mercenary arms, and without mentioning that any resistance was made, hastily concludes by saying that "in the tremendous defeat that was noised throughout Italy, no one perished excepting Lodovico degli Obizzi and two of his men, who being thrown from their horses, were smothered in the mud."[5] We shall see that he always repeats the same assertion with regard to other campaigns where there was much harder fighting, and the number of the fallen was more accurately known.

The immediate result of the rout of Zagonara was the overthrow of the Greater Guilds and the Albizzi in Florence. Every public place rang with execrations against their ambition. "Now have they created the Ten in order to strike terror into their enemies! Now have they succoured Forlì and wrested it from the hands of the Duke! Now at last their counsels are betrayed, and we see at what end they were aiming: they were labouring, not to defend liberty, which is hostile to them, but to increase their own power, which God has justly abased. Nor is this the only enterprise with which they have burdened the city, for there have been many others, and that against King Ladislaus much resembled this last. To whom can they now turn for aid? To Pope Martin, who has seen them inflict torture upon Braccio? To Queen Joan, who through their desertion was forced to cast herself into the arms of the King of Aragon?"[6]

[1] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 203–206.
[2] *Vide* Ibid., vol. i pp. 206 and 209; Cavalcanti, "Storie," vol. i. p 6.
[3] Cavalcanti, "Istorie Fiorentine," vol. i. pp. 59–64.
[4] Ammirato, "Storie," bk. xviii. at conclusion
[5] "Opere," vol. i. p 214.
[6] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 211, 212.

described by Cavalcanti, Machiavelli at last introduces on the scene Cosimo dei Medici, who had so patiently waited the opportunity that was now at hand. He describes him, praises his conduct, his singular prudence, and the very great liberality towards personal friends, that proved so advantageous to the increase of his power. He had at first been in favour of the war against Lucca, but now that, under Albizzi's mismanagement, it had turned out badly, Cosimo held his tongue and allowed all the odium to fall upon the former. Barbadori had discovered his deceit, but failed to persuade Niccolò da Uzzano[1] to join the Albizzi and drive Cosimo dei Medici from the city. In the narration of this visit to Uzzano, based on details given by Cavalcanti, Machiavelli omits the speech of Barbadori, but copies, with the usual modifications, that of Uzzano, adding nothing but a few reflections of his own. "And it would be well for thee, for thy house, and for our Republic, that thou and all those of thy opinion should have beards of silver rather than gold, for then their advice, as proceeding from hoary and experienced heads, might be wiser and more useful to each one of you."[2] "Our party is styled by you the party of the nobles; but if that be so, I may remind you that in Florence the nobles were always vanquished by the people. And what is now worse, we are divided and our adversaries united[3] And Cosimo has benefited the people in a thousand ways." "Accordingly you would have to give your reasons for expelling him, since he is pitiful, helpful, liberal, and beloved of all. Have the kindness to tell me what law prohibits or even blames and condemns piety, liberty, and love amongst men?[4] And although all these may be means to carry men flying to supreme power, nevertheless they are not so considered, and we cannot avail to make people understand it, because our own ways have deprived

[1] Machiavelli says, in speaking of this visit of Barbadori to Uzzano, that "he went to seek him in his own house where the latter dwelt in his study absorbed in thought" ("Opere," vol i. p. 244). Cavalcanti says that Niccolò had withdrawn from human intercourse into the solitude of his study, and the gravest confusions bewildered his mind. . . . He was using his hand as a pillow for chin and cheek," &c (vol 1 bk. vii. chap. vi. p. 380).

[2] "Opere," vol. i. pp 244–248 This is the opening of a speech according to Cavalcanti: "Niccolò, Niccolò Barbadori, would to God that thou couldst with reason be called Barba argenti! insomuch as it might signify that you were an aged veteran, in whom true judgment and excellent prudence might be found' (vol i. bk. vii. chap viii. p. 382).

[3] Here, likewise, Machiavelli imitates Cavalcanti, who writes: "We are not agreed either as to our mind or intentions" (bk. vii. chap. viii. p 383); and then he, too, alludes to the many Florentine dissensions, in which the nobles were always worsted.

[4] "What crime or what motives could be alleged against this man, so that the people should quietly submit to his undoing?" &c (Cavalcanti, vol i. p 386).

cating the method of levying taxes according to the ascertained amount of revenue, and no longer by arbitrary caprice, was opposed by the *popolo grasso*, favoured by the *popolo minuto*, and finally carried by the help of Giovanni,[1] who died shortly after (1429). The description of his death, his exhortation to his children, and even the eulogy upon him, are all taken from the same source, all improved by the same skilful touch.[2] Then, passing rapidly over other events, Machiavelli comes to the war against Lucca, which was again of use to the Medici. For although proclaimed at the instance of Astorre Gianni and Rinaldo degli Albizzi, who were appointed commissaries of war to the camp, it brought about their ruin. Astorre Gianni perpetrated great cruelties at Serravezza, notwithstanding the free surrender of that town. Accordingly, a few of its inhabitants brought complaints to Florence, saying: "This Commissary of yours has nothing human save his aspect, nothing Florentine save his name; he is a deadly pest, a savage beast, a horrible monster such as was never described by any writer."[3] Thereupon Astorre was recalled, and Albizzi being greatly enraged at having been accused of embezzlement with regard to the victualling of the army and the spoils of war, forsook the camp and threw up his office.[4] After that the war went badly, and the Florentines were defeated near the river Serchio.

After a brief record of these military doings, which are minutely

[1] "Opere," vol. i. p. 224; Cavalcanti, bk. iv. chaps. viii. and ix.; bk. v. chap. 1

[2] "Opere," vol. i. p. 225; Cavalcanti, vol. i. bk. v. chaps. iii.–v. This is how Cavalcanti begins his account of the death of Giovanni dei Medici: "Two rats, one black and one white, having nibbled the roots of the fruit tree that had nourished that excellent citizen Giovanni dei Medici, its branches began to bend rapidly towards the hard earth. By this infirmity Giovanni knew that his life wished to reduce his wet and frigid humours to water, disperse his breath in the air, and render his body to the earth, and thus return his heat and dry parts to fire." Polidori thinks that the white and black rats signify day and night, namely, his past existence, or possibly even pleasure and pain.

[3] "Opere," vol. i. p 235. In Cavalcanti the speech is attributed to the Florence mob, instead of to the men of Serravezza, and begins thus: "We knew that no wolf ever gave birth to a lamb; and therefore we might have expected that a man descended from so shameful a stock would partake of the nature of his progenitors and be sanguinary," &c. (Cavalcanti, bk. vi. chap. xi).

[4] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 236, 237; Cavalcanti, bk. vi. chaps. xiii and xiv. According to Machiavelli the two commissaries were both at the camp at the same time, and this seems to have been the fact But according to Cavalcanti, Albizzi was sent to take the place of Gianni. However, all that is alleged against the latter by Cavalcanti and copied by Machiavelli, may at least be said to be grossly exaggerated. *Vide* Gino Capponi, "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," vol i p. 496 and fol., and the "Commissioni" of Rinaldo degli Albizzi, published by the Deputazione di Storia Patria, in 3 vols., Florence, 1867, 1869, 1873.

account to be found in Cavalcanti. "He reminded Guadag that if Messer Salvestro dei Medici had been able to curb th power of the Guelphs, who were entitled to the government fo which they had shed their blood, he (Guadagni) might justly d to one man that which had been unjustly done to so many.[1] H bade him fear nothing, since his friends would defend him b force, and Cosimo would gain no more from the mob that no seemed to adore him than had Messer Giorgio Scali; nor wa there anything to be feared on the score of his wealth, since, o being seized by the Signory, his possessions likewise would fa into their hands. In short, this deed would ensure the safety an unity of the Republic, and confer glory on himself."[2]

From Cavalcanti, too, is derived the whole account of the im prisonment, exile, and triumphant return of Cosimo, not only a regards its general outline, but down to its minutest details an expressions[3] Many incidents in Cavalcanti are by Machiavel but there is hardly anything in the latter's work that is not to b found in the former's. The very words of reproof that, at th end of this book, Albizzi, when sentenced to exile, hurls again Pope Eugenius IV., are derived from the same source.[4] Machi velli, however, always added something of his own, not mere the marvellous style that wrought so magical a change, but th logical connection and profound intuition of events. It is on from his pages that we learn why times of war raised the Albiz and the Greater Guilds to power, times of peace on the contrar the Lesser Guilds; how the Medici were always lurking as it we in ambuscade behind these latter, currying favour with the low classes, and always making a show of favouring them, in order

[1] The identical idea is to be found in Cavalcanti, vol. i. p. 503.

[2] And in Cavalcanti. "We will secretly provide ourselves with arm followers, advising thee that all veteran politicians are worshipping thee wi clasped hands. They will carry arms hidden under their cloaks for the defen of justice" (vol. i. p. 504). "Be afraid of nothing, and less than all of t populace; for every multitude is lost without a head . . . Follow the examp of Messer Giorgio Scali" (Ibid, p 505). "Again, the riches will not r main in the pocket of him who would spend them; inasmuch as they may taken from him, as soon as you have him in your power . . . Your glory w ring through the city: writers will heap glory and fame upon you" (Ibi p 506)

[3] "Opere," vol. i. pp. 253-260, Cavalcanti, vol. i bk. ix. chaps. xxiii.-xx and xxviii.; bk. x. chaps. i.-v, and xix.

[4] In Machiavelli ("Opere," vol. i p. 259), Albizzi says: "But I blame mys more than any other, since I held the belief that you, who had once been driv from your country, would have been able to keep me in mine." In Cavalca (vol. i. p 608) the speech stands thus: "I heartily blame myself for trusting the promises of one who has been unequal to helping himself, inasmuch as who is impotent in his own cause will never be potent in that of another."

us of belief." "Certainly, difficult as it would be to expel Cosimo, yet with the aid of a well-disposed Signory, it might be accomplished. Very soon, however, he would return," "and all you would have gained reduced to this, that he would have been driven away a good man and restored to us a bad one; for his nature would be corrupted by those who assisted to restore him, and whom he would be unable to oppose on account of his obligations to them"[1] This, in fact, was precisely what occurred, and might easily have been foreseen by the sagacious. Therefore Machiavelli has been greatly praised for this concluding remark, which, as well as nearly all the rest of the speech, was borrowed from Cavalcanti.

Niccolò da Uzzano died, and Rinaldo degli Albizzi and Cosimo dei Medici remained in conflict, and with their respective adherents once more kept the city divided. "Whenever," writes Machiavelli, still borrowing from Cavalcanti, "a magistrate was about to be elected, it was publicly declared how many were of this, and how many of that party, and the whole city was in a ferment every time the names of a new Signory were drawn. No case, however trifling, could be brought before the magistrates without being converted into a party struggle; secrets were divulged; both good and evil went by favour; honest men were attacked as virulently as bad; no magistrate fulfilled his duty."[2] Again, when Bernardo Guadagni, one of Albizzi's friends, was about to be elected Gonfalonier, the latter, to prevent the annulling of the election, provided him with money for the taxes that he had not yet been able to pay,[3] and begged him to profit by his new position to obtain the expulsion of Cosimo dei Medici, whose power was still on the increase. Even in reporting this speech Machiavelli gives us a very faithful summary of the

[1] "He will go away entirely good, and return entirely different; inasmuch as he will necessarily be obliged to change his nature and habits, in consequence of the iniquity of his expulsion, which would overthrow every just method of political life. And less of his own fault than because he would be urged by the incitements of bad men; inasmuch as he would go away a free man, and return under obligations to every member of the sect of *arrabbiati*, to whom, on account of the benefits received from them, in their recalling him to his country, he would be compelled, by force of gratitude, to promise and to bestow assistance in the accomplishment of their iniquities" (Cavalcanti, vol. i. bk. vii. chap viii. p. 386).

[2] "Opere," vol. i. p. 248. Cavalcanti says "And directly any nomination had to be made to some principal office of the State, every one in the city calculated how many there were of the one party, how many of the other. . . . And no Signory could be elected, without the whole city being in a turmoil," &c (vol. i. p. 494) "And no case, whether just or unjust, useful or hurtful, could be judged by any tribunal without the two parties of the citizens struggling for the upper hand: and it was in this way that our poor little city was governed" (Ibid, p 495). [3] "Opere," vol. i. p 248; Cavalcanti, vol. i. bk. ix. chap iii.



CHAPTER XIV.

The "Florentine Histories"—Books v and vi, or the triumph of the Medici and the Italian wars—Books vii and viii, or Lorenzo dei Medici and the conspiracies—The "Historical Fragments"—"Extracts from Letters to the Ten of Balia"—The rough sketch of the "Histories"



HE four following books constitute the third and last part of the "Storie," and are not very well arranged. Machiavelli should now have touched upon the despotism of the Medici, and the manner in which they wrought the destruction of liberty. But this was a theme that bristled with difficulties for him. Even while lauding their merits, he must have harshly censured their political conduct; and to do this with the requisite freedom was altogether impossible in a work dedicated to Clement VII. On the 30th of August, 1524, he wrote to Guicciardini: "I am in the country working at my history, and I would pay ten *soldi*—I will not say more—to be able to consult you; for I have reached a point upon which your opinion would be thankfully received, namely: Whether I give too much offence by my praise or my blame. Nevertheless, I shall do my best to speak the truth, without giving any one cause for complaint.[1] In the fifth and sixth books he pauses to say a great deal of the Florentine, and, indeed, of the Italian wars in general, and expresses still stronger condemnation of the captains of adventure, in order to insist that they were the cause of Italy's ruin. From time to time he

[1] "Opere," vol. viii. p 165, letter liii.

trample on them all afterwards. In this way he has transmuted Cavalcanti's diffuse and tedious narrative into a new and original history, revealing the secret arts of the Medici. For the earlier work is abominably ill-written; the gravest events and most insignificant details are all treated alike in it, and being given one after the other, without any order or connection, are thus deprived of their special meaning and historical value. On this account it is highly useful to establish a comparison between the two works, and we have thought it our duty to devote much time and space to the task.



single intent of proclaiming the evil nature of similar wars, and their ruinous effects upon Italy and freedom. He vents these opinions spasmodically, now hastily reverting to the internal affairs of Florence, and again putting them aside with equal haste.

Cosimo's triumphant return, and the persecutions that quickly ensued, inspire the author with certain remarks serving to reveal his true opinion of those events, and why he shrank from their narration. "Not only by party hatreds were the citizens injured at that time; but wealth, family ties, and private enmities also combined to their hurt. And had these proscriptions been accompanied by bloodshed, they would have resembled those of Octavian and Scylla. As it was, some taint of blood rested on them, for Bernardo Guadagni and certain other citizens were beheaded."[1] The magistrates were not changed, but their functions were altered, and their political authority was lessened. By means of the Balie it was contrived that the new elections should have favourable results for the Medici; such being ever the art of government practised by that family.[2] This fifth book tells us little more of the internal history of Florence, and again recurs to the narrative of the principal Italian wars.[3]

In fact, he now shifts the scene from Florence to Naples, relating the death of Joan II., the coming of Alfonso of Aragon, and the war waged by that prince against the Genoese, who captured him and his two brothers, and gave them up to Filippo Maria Visconti, by whose orders they had fought. At this point Cavalcanti invents a strange and absurd harangue, supposed to be uttered by the Duke at the moment of giving his prisoners their release, and

of Visconti, who was never a peace-maker, but only a promoter of warfare. He adds that Sforza, by way of marking his contempt for the Pope, always dated his letters · *Ex Girifalco nostro firmiano, invitis Petro et Paulo* ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 5) But I am not aware that these words exist in any document, nor are they recorded by other historians. Rubieri reasonably remarks, that even if employed by Sforza, it must have been at a later date than that supposed by Machiavelli; because in the years 1433, 1435 Sforza had no cause for anger against the Pope. E Rubieri, "Francesco Sforza, Narrazione storica." Florence, Le Monnier, 1879, two vols. Vol. i. p. 225, note 2; and p. 342, note 2.

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 8; Cavalcanti, bk. x. chaps 21-25.

[2] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 9; Cavalcanti, bk. x. chap. 20.

[3] We may here mention the authorities used by Machiavelli when writing of these wars Johannis Simonetae, "Historia de rebus gestis Francisci Primi Sfortiae vicecomitis Mediolanensium ducis," published in Muratori's "Rerum italicarum Scriptores," vol. xxi. *Flavio Biondo's* history, which is the best authority, particularly as to the wars carried on in the States of the Church during this period. *Vide* Deca. iii. chaps. v. and vi. The "Commentarii di Neri di Gino Capponi" (1419-1456), in Muratori's "Rerum italicarum Scriptores," vol xviii The "Cacciata del Conte di Poppi," also by Capponi, in the same volume of Muratori.

reverts to home events, for which he still uses Cavalcanti as an authority; but soon quits them to resume the subject of the wars. And in their recital he sometimes refers to Flavio Biondo, at others to Gino Capponi and Simonetta, who had often been eye-witnesses of the battles in question.

After some allusions to his own well-known theories on the rise and decline of States, he remarks that in every human society military leaders and military deeds are the first to become famous, and next philosophy and letters. "Arms bring victory, victory quiet, nor can the strength of men's minds be more honestly corrupted than by means of letters. Italy likewise underwent these vicissitudes, being happy and miserable in turn with the Etruscans and Romans. And although, since the ruin of the Empire, nothing has been done towards her redemption, towards her performing glorious deeds under the rule of a virtuous prince although she has never succeeded in achieving true unity, nevertheless, she once had sufficient valour to resist the barbarians. Afterwards came times of peace without tranquillity, and war without peril. For princes and States often attacked one another; but we cannot apply the name of wars to quarrels in which no men were killed, no cities sacked, no kingdoms destroyed. These affairs, in fact, began without alarm, were pursued without danger, completed without injury. And thus military valour, extinguished elsewhere by long-enduring peace, was extinguished among us by wars of the above kind, as will be shown by what we shall have to say of the period between 1434 and 1494, when again barbarians were admitted, and again bound Italy in their chains." "And if in this account of subsequent events in this lower world there will be no tales to tell of the bravery of soldiers, the skill of captains, or the devotion of citizens to their country; at least, we can relate by what frauds, by what wiles and tricks, princes, soldiers, and heads of republics, contrived to maintain the reputation of which they were unworthy."[1] This is the introduction to the fifth book.

Machiavelli then begins to speak of the two different schools of Italian arms, the one headed by Francesco Sforza, the other by Niccolò Fortebraccio and Niccolò Piccinini. He gives a hasty, incomplete, and far from exact account of their enterprises in the States of the Church after the year 1433,[2] and always with the

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. pp. 1–4.

[2] Machiavelli says that Sforza and Fortebraccio went to skirmish in the States of the Church on their own account, because they were unable to live without making war; but the truth was, that they were sent there by the secret command of Filippo Maria Visconti. Machiavelli mentions among other matters ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 5) a treaty of peace arranged between Sforza and Fortebraccio, by means

his desire to speak ill of soldiers of adventure. Although able to refer to noted authors giving minute and faithful accounts of the battle, he disregards their testimony in order to indulge in almost incredible exaggeration. While compelled to admit that Piccinini was utterly beaten, he adds that, "in so complete a defeat, so prolonged a conflict, lasting from twenty to twenty-four hours, none perished save one man, who died, not from his wounds or other worthy hurts, but by being thrown and crushed by his own horse." The captains would not pursue the enemy, actually released its men-at-arms, against the will of the Florentine Commissaries, and contrary to every good rule of war, and then went off to Arezzo to deposit their spoils. Therefore it is only astonishing that the enemy should have been cowardly enough to let itself be defeated by an army of that sort."[1] However, the writers of the period say nothing of all this. Capponi, one of the Commissaries in camp, makes great complaints of the army; but declares that the enemy was pursued to its entrenchments, and that 1,540 prisoners were taken. Then, in speaking of the care the Florentines were obliged to bestow on their wounded, he plainly makes us understand that the battle had not been altogether bloodless.[2] Flavio Biondo, also an excellent authority as to this period, speaks of sixty killed, and four hundred wounded, on the Duke's side; of two hundred wounded, and ten killed, on that of the Florentines; besides six hundred horses of this and the other army, shot down by the artillery. He farther adds that Captain Astorre Manfredi was made prisoner after being wounded.[3] Bracciolini says that the enemy had forty dead and many wounded.[4]

After recounting the taking of the Casentino, thanks to the efforts of Commissary Capponi,[5] and the death of Rinaldo degli Albizzi, Machiavelli concludes the fifth book, and begins the sixth by an introduction in which he reiterates his laments on the manner in which wars were then conducted. He relates the deeds of arms in Lombardy between Piccinini, who was in the service of the Duke,

[1] "Opere," vol. ii pp. 65, 66. [2] Capponi, "Commentarii," col. 1195.

[3] Biondo, &c., in the single book of Deca. iv.

[4] Poggii, "Historia Fiorentina," bk vii. p. 349, Venetiis, 1715. See also Gino Capponi, "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze," vol. ii p. 23, and note 1.

[5] In this latter portion of bk. v. ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 60 and fol.), Machiavelli not only makes use of Capponi's "Commentarii" (*Vide* "Commentarii," col. 1194, C. D), but also of the "Cacciata del Conte di Poppi," by the same writer, and published in Muratori, after the "Commentarii" In this (Muratori, vol. xviii. col. 1220) we find the dialogue between the Count of Poppi and Capponi, also quoted by Machiavelli. ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 69) Aretino's history ends with the battle of Anghiari. Cavalcanti, without describing the battle of Anghiari, passes to the death of Albizzi. The intermediate events are only in part narrated by Cavalcanti in the printed fragments of that which Polidori styles the "Seconda Storia."

overwhelming them with rhetorical, inflated, and empty compliments.[1] Machiavelli, on the contrary, assigns a speech to Alfonso of Aragon, who by skilful reasoning persuades the Duke to set him at liberty. I am not aware that this speech has any foundation on fact; but it contains the real motives which in Machiavelli's opinion must have decided the Duke to free his prisoners as he actually did. "It was more dangerous for the Duke than for any one else," so the king must have told him, "to allow the Angevins to triumph in Naples through the captivity of the Aragonese. Milan would thus have the French both to north and south, and the Duke would be at their mercy. Hence no one could have a greater interest than himself in promoting the victory of the Aragonese in Naples, unless indeed he should prefer the gratification of a caprice to the safety of his State."[2]

Then came the rebellion of the Genoese, who were enraged by having fought in vain, and compelled to convey back the liberated Aragonese on board their own vessels; and afterwards ensued the alliance between Genoa, Florence, and Venice against Milan, which was defended by the forces of Niccolò Piccinini.[3] At this point Machiavelli begins to make use of the "Commentarii" of Neri Capponi, relying on them even for his narrative of the wars between Sforza and Piccinini.[4] He then passes to the adventures of the celebrated and haughty Cardinal Vitelleschi,[5] gleaned from Flavio Biondo, and soon pauses to give an account of the battle of Anghiari, provoked and won by the Florentines by means of their hired troops, against the forces of Piccinini, who fought for Visconti. Here again the author lets himself be carried away by

[1] According to Cavalcanti, the Duke's speech began thus: "Oh most serene kings, oh most gentle lords, oh most illustrious knights, you are no captives, but rather the captors of our love," &c. (vol. ii. bk. ix. chap. v. p. 11).

[2] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 11.

[3] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 11 and fol.; Flavio Biondo, Deca. iii. bk. vii p 503 and fol.

[4] Let the reader compare the terms in which Machiavelli ("Opere," vol. vii. pp 37-40) relates the reception of Capponi by the Venetian Senate, with the account given by Capponi of the same incident in his "Commentarii." (Muratori, "Rer. ital," vol. xviii. col. 188, 189.) Even from the description of the various routes that Sforza might have followed, it is clear that Machiavelli relies upon Capponi. A little further on the latter (col. 190 D.) speaks of Piccinini's defeat by Sforza, near Brescia, and tells how the former fled through the camp borne on the shoulders of a Slavonian. In order to make the story more romantic Machiavelli tells us (vol. ii. p. 44) that Piccinini had a very strong German servant, whom he persuaded to put him in a sack, and, as if laden with fighting gear, bear him through the enemy's camp, where no watch was kept, and thus secure his escape In fact the German, "having hoisted him on his shoulders, and being disguised as a porter, passed through the whole camp without any hindrance, and brought him in safety to his own men."

[5] Deca. iv. bk. i. p 563 and fol.

thee of the benefits which thou hast received from the Milanese, in order thus to prove thy ingratitude, and taste some pleasure by casting it in thy teeth. We took thee into our service when thou wert forsaken by all, and instantly thou didst begin to betray us. For thou hast not waited until now to lay bare thy iniquitous soul; but showed signs of it when first in command of our forces, by accepting the surrender of Pavia in thine own name. It was doubtless an error to place our trust in one who had so often played the traitor; but although our scanty prudence may accuse us, it cannot excuse thy perfidy, and thou shouldst judge thyself worthy of the punishment awarded to parricides." [1]

This is the principal episode in the fifth and sixth books, and, in spite of their disorderly arrangement, serves to emphasize their aim and to give them unity. Sforza's career, in fact, and the means by which he grasped the lordship of Milan, first undermining the power of the Duke, and then perfidiously betraying the Republic, afford the clearest possible exemplification of the little confidence that could be placed in captains of adventure. After this Machiavelli narrates other wars, and thus nears the end of the sixth book, concluding it by an account of the events occurring in the kingdom of Naples down to the death of Alfonso of Aragon and Ferrante's accession to the throne.

He opens the seventh book with excuses for having strayed too far into the general history of Italy; alleging that it seemed indispensable for the better explanation of that of Florence, to which he now recurs for a short space, with some fresh reflections, by way of preface, on the methods by which the Medici found their way to absolute power through the confusion of party strife.

"In all cities parties are inevitable; but party leaders may become influential and powerful by public or by private courses. When a campaign or an embassy is accomplished in praiseworthy fashion, or when useful counsels are proffered to the Republic, then a man rises by public courses, renders service to his country, and will readily find friends and adherents. When benefits or favours are bestowed on private individuals, and gratifications in the form of money or office; when the people are treated to amusements and public festivities, then men rise by private courses, and gain partizans who create sects, the which never fail to produce evil. A wise legislator will always seek to crush sects, even if divisions cannot be altogether avoided. Neri Capponi attained power solely by public measures; Cosimo dei Medici both by public and private measures, and accordingly gained not only friends but partizans, who formed themselves into a sect.

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. pp. 103-106.

and Sforza, who first fought for Venice and the Florentines, and then changing sides, served under the Duke against Piccinini, who had also changed his flag. He now suddenly reverts to the affairs of Florence, narrating how Cosimo had lived in the greatest rivalry and jealousy with Neri Capponi, and Baldaccio d'Anghiari, and how the latter was treacherously put to death, and hurled from the palace windows.[1] Cavalcanti and Machiavelli assign the entire blame[2] of this deed to Cosimo's friends; but Guicciardini declares, and perhaps with greater truth, that the prime instigator of the murder was Cosimo himself, who succeeded in ridding himself of one enemy, and enfeebling another, in such wise that none could accuse him of guilt.[3]

Then—for this book sins against unity as much as the preceding one—the narrative of the Lombard wars is again resumed and carried down to the death of the Duke without heirs: the event so long anticipated by Sforza, his captain and rival. Machiavelli now digresses into a sketch of the history of the Ambrosian Republic and its capital blunder in choosing for its captain one like Sforza, who shamelessly betrayed it, by striking it down with the weapons hired for its defence.[4] With Simonetta's history before his eyes, he nevertheless, in his enmity to Sforza, the destroyer of a republic, gives an arbitrary colouring to the ugly tale,[5] without even doing justice to the political and military genius of that leader. And to enhance the strangeness of the whole narrative, he puts in the mouths of the representatives of the betrayed Republic an eloquent discourse, of a kind that they would never have dared to address to Sforza; but which clearly demonstrates the opinion of his conduct, and the love of liberty by which Machiavelli was always inspired. Coming to the camp of the victorious traitor, the Milanese deputation are supposed to have addressed him in the following terms: "It were useless for us to employ supplications, promises, or threats, since these have no effect upon powerful and cruel men. But now that we are acquainted with thy ambition and cruelty, we would only remind

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. pp. 81–83.

[2] Cavalcanti, vol. ii. p. 161; "Opere," vol. ii pp 82–84.

[3] "Storia Fiorentina," in vol. iii. of "Opere Inedite," p 8

[4] "Historia de rebus gestis Fr. Sfortiæ," &c., in Muratori, vol. xxi. pp. 485–598 and fol.

[5] His blunders are various. For instance, he tells us ("Opere," vol. ii. p 98) that the Duke of Savoy was fighting for the Duke of Orleans, whereas he was a combatant on his own account; that Sforza wished to cross the Adda to attack the Brescian territory, and places Brescia and Caravaggio on opposite sides of the river (p. 99), whereas both are situated on the left bank. And it was Gismondo Malatesta who was captain of the Venetians, not Pandolfo as asserted by Machiavelli.

henceforth to relate were to be found recorded in many contemporary histories, and were fresh in the memories of all men. For this reason it would be superfluous to make an investigation of his authorities. He told of events known and repeated by all; he sometimes studied the accounts given by others, and even confirmatory documents; he sometimes trusted to his own memory. What specially engaged his attention was the analysis of the passions and feelings animating the conspirators, whose doings he describes and represents with an eloquence and force rendering certain of these pages some of the finest in his history. But here, also, for the better accomplishment of his design, he does not scruple to occasionally arrange facts and invent speeches according to his own taste.

He starts by narrating the end of Jacopo Piccinini, who, encouraged thereto by Sforza, left Milan for Naples, where he was perfidiously murdered by Ferrante of Aragon. Machiavelli unhesitatingly attributes this crime to the concerted treachery of two Italian princes who, even as their colleagues, "feared in others the valour they had not in themselves, and crushed it so utterly that it ceased to exist in any man, the which later proved the cause of the general ruin."[1] Guicciardini, on the other hand, is more cautious in his judgments, and remarks that even if the agreement—always indignantly denied by Sforza—was actually made, it was impossible to ascertain the fact with any certainty, because the two sovereigns would never have concluded it in a way that could become patent to others."[2]

Then follows the plot woven in Florence against Piero dei Medici, a weak man both in body and mind, but who on this occasion rose superior to the common expectation. Nevertheless, Machiavelli colours his facts in such-wise as to unduly enhance the prudence and promptitude displayed by Piero. The latter received a note of warning from Ercole Bentivoglio, informing him that his enemies had collected troops and were already on the march to Florence. Thereupon, although in the country and prostrated by sickness, Piero immediately sent off despatches to summon armed adherents to his aid, and, carried on a litter, was conveyed back to the city escorted by his friends. Once within the walls this unexpected promptitude enabled him to set matters straight. But Machiavelli is not satisfied with this plain version of the affair, and to make Piero seem far more sagacious than he really was, pretends that the latter, being aware that a plot was on foot against him, only feigned to

[1] "Opere," vol ii p 158
[2] Guicciardini, "Storia Fiorentina," p. 17 and fol

This remained more or less united from 1434 to 1455, and during those twenty-one years, succeeded, by means of the Balìe, in rising no fewer than six times to the head of affairs. But after Capponi's death (1455) there was a split among the partizans of the Medici, some again desiring the Balìa, others election by ballot. The former carried the day, and thereupon the sect became more powerful and audacious than before. This government, which lasted eight years, was insupportable and violent, for Cosimo, being old and weary, allowed his adherents to do as they would, without restraint, and his friend Luca Pitti thought of nothing but the construction of his palace, and accepted contributions from every one."[1]

Cosimo's death took place in 1464, and Machiavelli was necessarily obliged to insert an eulogium on him. He accordingly says, that Cosimo afforded an unique example of power achieved in a free city, without violence and by prudence and astuteness alone. He succeeded in holding the State for thirty-one years, turning both the internal divisions of the city as well as its external wars to his own advantage, inasmuch as he could discern danger from afar, and prepared his remedies in good time. Machiavelli likewise alludes to Cosimo's patronage of letters and the arts; but even at this point he shows no inclination to enlarge on the subject of the new culture then initiated in Florence, and in the promotion of which the Medici had so large a share. Then, being neither able nor willing to say all that he thought of Cosimo's political character, he winds up by reporting a few of his sayings, which certainly furnish a sufficiently clear idea of the Pater Patriæ even in his least praiseworthy aspects:— States are not to be ruled by paternosters.—A worthy man may be made with two ells of crimson cloth.[2]—This latter dictum was Cosimo's reply to those who accused him of admitting men of little worth into the palace and offices of the State. His meaning was, that if you gave any one enough red cloth for an official mantle, or *lucco*, he would be as respectable as any other citizen.

Machiavelli's history now enters upon a new theme, forming the principal subject of its two last books. Italian society was becoming more and more corrupt; despotism triumphed on all sides; war was conducted in an increasingly scandalous fashion; the only protests, only signs of energy and love of liberty, consisting in the many conspiracies hatched during those years. Therefore conspiracies and the devices by which tyrants sought to defend themselves against their own subjects are the chief topics of the narrative. The events that Machiavelli had

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 147.
[2] Ibid., vol. ii. pp 148–155.

prisoners taken on either side."[1] Ammirato[2] justly remarks that there was gross exaggeration in this, inasmuch as all writers of the period speak of about several hundred slain, and Guicciardini says outright that the battle was "a gallant deed of arms."[3]

After this Machiavelli returns to the subject of conspiracies. A Florentine exile, one Bernardo Nardi, in concert with Diotisalvi Neroni, went to Prato to rouse that place to revolt against Florence, and Lorenzo and Giuliano dei Medici, who had now succeeded to Piero. In recounting this affair, Machiavelli describes a scene unnoticed by other writers, and of little apparent credibility. He tells us that Nardi seized the Podestà, and was on the point of hanging him by the neck from the palace window, when the latter, with the halter already about him, pronounced so logical and well reasoned a speech, accompanied by so many promises, that Nardi was induced to set him at liberty.[4] But the moment the Podestà was at large, the conspiracy collapsed and Nardi's head was cut off. The truth was that the enterprise failed at the beginning because the people refused to rise, and the representative of the Florentine government had no difficulty in overcoming and punishing the rebels.

After the rebellion, surrender, and most inhuman sack of Volterra, Machiavelli comes to the principal episode of the seventh book, namely the conspiracy against Galeazzo Maria Sforza, Duke of Milan, that broke out in 1476. This is described with much vigour, and its style rises in intensity towards the tragic close of the sanguinary drama. With the touch of a Tacitus, the author depicts the vices of the Duke, who injured every one, insulted every one, making public boast of the women he had dishonoured, and records the fierce hatred against his tyranny raging in his victims'

would seem that he does all this rather of set purpose than because he is mistaken, or is ignorant that those things happened otherwise, and perhaps he did them in order to make his writing finer or to relieve it from tedium."

Gino Capponi, in his "Storia della Repubblica di Firenze" (vol. ii. p 88, note 2 and elsewhere), also recognizes that Ammirato is right, and adds that Bruto, who lived a century later than Machiavelli, wrote that he only followed him when absolutely compelled to do so, because he so frequently found him incorrect.

[1] "Opere," vol. ii p. 178.

[2] This is the account given by Ammirato, vol. v. bk. xxii. p. 178: "Both parties fought with incredible valour until nightfall, with the loss on either side of three hundred men-at-arms, and four hundred horses, if we may believe the writer of the "Life of Coglione" (Bartolommeo Colleone). The writer on the affairs of Ferrara numbers the slain at one thousand. Some memoirs in my possession give the number as eight hundred, of whom the greater part were Venetians. Machiavelli, with his customary sneers at the expense of hired troops, says that no one was killed. By Sabellico, this battle is styled very sanguinary, although he does not give the number of the slain"

[3] "Storia Fiorentina," p. 22.

[4] "Opere," vol ii. pp. 187, 188.

have received a letter from Bentivoglio, as a pretext for suddenly taking arms. Nevertheless, his unfaithfulness to history in favour of the Medicean acumen does not preclude him from censuring the conduct of Piero and his friends in persecuting his adversaries so fiercely, "that it seemed as though God had delivered this city as a prey into their hands."[1] It is impossible to suppose that similar blunders were always involuntary, for we often find proofs to the contrary. In fact, shortly afterwards, the exiles, desiring to return to Florence, applied for Piero's permission. Among others, Angelo Acciaiuoli wrote to him from Sienna, asking pardon in somewhat ironical and almost offensive terms, and Piero replied, refusing pardon, but in a courteous and sufficiently dignified tone. Both letters are still extant, and Machiavelli had undoubtedly seen them, for he gives certain portions of them verbatim, while altering the rest so as to make Acciaiuoli appear humbler, Piero harder and more cynical than was really the case.[2] The latter was positively eccentric sometimes, and then yielded solely to the caprices of his fancy.

Hence Ammirato is not altogether wrong, when, on reaching this point in his "Storie Fiorentine," he loses patience, and after indicating various errors in Machiavelli's work, declares that the latter changes names and years, adds, takes away, diminishes, and what is worse, not always by mistake, but of set purpose and to enhance the eloquence of his narrative.[3] In fact, in describing a little later on, the battle of Molinella in 1466, between the Venetians and the Florentines, he, as usual, winds up with the following words: "They came to a pitched battle, that went on for half the day without either side giving way. Nevertheless, there were no killed; a few horses only were wounded, and some

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 177.

[2] The two original letters are printed in Fabroni's "Vita Laurentii Medicis Magnifici," vol. ii. p. 36. If compared with those given by Machiavelli ("Opere," vol. ii. p. 173 and fol.), it will be seen that while certain phrases are correctly reproduced, all the rest is substantially altered.

[3] Ammirato had some justification in saying this; but he exaggerated, because he entirely failed to grasp the historical value of Machiavelli's work: he only praised its style, and blamed everything else in it, including the language. *Vide* what he says in the "Ritratti," published in the second volume of his "Opuscoli." Meanwhile, this is what the same author writes of Machiavelli in his "Storia" bk. xxiii. vol. v. p. 169 (Florence, Batelli, 1846–1849): "He makes it appear that the Duke Francesco died after the gonfalonierate of Niccolò Soderini, and that Piero dei Medici was alive after the death of Pope Paul. He attributes to Luca Pitti that which appertained to Roberto Sostegni, names Bardo Altoviti as Gonfalonier of justice after Ruberto Lioni, who never held that post. In short, he changes years, alters names, twists facts, confounds causes, increases, adds, takes away, diminishes, and does anything that suits his fancy, without check, without any lawful restraint, and what is still more tiresome, in many places it

carried away by his own eloquence, and adds a few minor details of his own invention; but as he makes no change in essential facts, this only serves to dress them in livelier tints. Here and there the vivid and forcible narrative is interrupted by brief reflections, but these parentheses enhance rather than lessen its effect.

Montesecco, who was a soldier of fortune, refused to take part in the execution of the plot, on learning that Lorenzo and Giuliano were to be stabbed in the Duomo at the moment of the elevation of the host. He would not add sacrilege to treason. Two other men were therefore chosen in haste, and one of these being a priest, it was thought that he might have fewer scruples, by reason of his greater familiarity with consecrated things. But on the contrary, this man proved the ruin of the enterprise, "inasmuch as, more than in any other affair, a great and steadfast mind inured by experience to matters of life and death is indispensable to business of this kind, wherein even men skilled in war and stained with blood have very often been found to lack courage."[1] Machiavelli is absolutely unrivalled in his description of the conspirators, who, to ensure striking both their destined victims at the same moment, go to seek Giuliano and escort him to the cathedral. "It is truly a noteworthy matter, that so great a hatred, so fixed a resolve to commit so monstrous an excess, could be so courageously and persistently concealed by Francesco (Pazzi) and Bernardo (Bandini). For in conducting him to the temple, they entertained him by the way, and even in the church, with merry jests and youthful chatter. Nor, while feigning to caress him, did Francesco forget to press him in his arms, in order to ascertain whether he were provided with a cuirass or other defensive armour."[2]

Afterwards, at the destined moment, he threw himself on him, "covered him with wounds; and struck at him with so much determination, that, in the blindness of his fury, he inflicted a serious injury on one of his own legs." Lorenzo had escaped the strokes of the assassins, and Bandini, seeing him still alive after Giuliano was dead, vainly made a desperate rush at him, and killed another who threw himself between them, for Lorenzo had time to save himself by flight into the sacristy. So great was the tumult, that it seemed as though the cathedral were falling.[3] The terrific confusion of the crowd, the shrieks, the

[1] "Opere," vol ii p. 214. In the "Discourses," he had already made the identical remark on the same subject. "Forasmuch no man, without previous experience, can be assured of his aptitude for any great deed" ("Discorsi," bk iii. ch 6; in the "Opere," vol. iii. p 331). [2] Ibid., vol. ii pp. 214, 215

[3] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 216. Poliziano, in his "De pactiana coniuratione," says: "Fuerunt et qui crederent templum corruere."

minds. While composing this narrative, Machiavelli must certainly have made himself acquainted with the daring confession of Olgiati, afterwards published by Corio, and accordingly gives a very truthful and remarkably enthusiastic description of the ardour of this youth and his two companions, and of how they were stirred to conspiracy by the Latin authors they had studied with their master, Niccolò Montano. Their preliminary speeches and preparations, their zealous training in the art of dealing quick and forcible blows with sheathed daggers, and above all the strange mixture of pagan hatred against tyranny, and the Christian sentiment with which they sought to justify that hate, are all rendered and held up to our view with so much graphic power as to afford a most vivid and accurate perception of the modes of thought and feeling of the period. In these respects, nothing comparable with this passage can well be found in any other writer, whether of ancient or modern times. And Machiavelli surpasses himself, when, after the murder of the Duke in church, he describes the heroic end of Olgiati, the only one of the conspirators who survived the first outburst of popular wrath. When subjected to torture, this youth, as it is even recorded in the documents of his trial, invoked the aid of the Virgin, and strode undauntedly to the scaffold, declaiming Latin couplets in praise of liberty.[1] Certainly Italian prose could hardly furnish specimens of a more vigorous and eloquent style than that attained by Machiavelli at this point.

Nevertheless, he was equal to a still higher flight. The eighth book is a sequel to the seventh, and pursues the same theme. Having already explained in the "Discourse" his general views on conspiracy, the author now, without any preamble, dashes into the history of the Pazzi plot that broke out in Florence in the year 1478. For this was the central point, the climax of the series of dark and sanguinary deeds recorded in the two concluding volumes of the "Histories." It had been already narrated by Poliziano and other eye-witnesses, and was, therefore, well known to all Florence. Machiavelli must have certainly questioned more than one of those who were present at its occurrence, and read the confession of Montesecco, one of the conspirators,[2] which was made public four months after the event, and is also recorded by Guicciardini.[3] The narrative of so famous a plot allowed no scope for capricious variations; accordingly, it is not only an exact and faithful account, but also a true masterpiece of style. Once or twice the author is

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. pp. 198–203.

[2] So says Ammirato, and so, too, may be inferred from Machiavelli's own narrative. *Vide* Capponi, "Storia," &c. vol. ii p. 113, note 1.

[3] "Storia Fiorentina," p 42.

whose craft had completed the destruction of Florentine liberty, and who had devoted himself to the patronage of artists and *literati*, when, on the contrary, he should have felt bound to train men for military service. But Guicciardini, who had never experienced any very ardent enthusiasm for the Republic, and who wrote his "Florentine History" in his youth, when the Medici were in banishment and no one foresaw the possibility of their return, was able to speak of Lorenzo with far greater freedom and independence of mind. Accordingly, his portrait of that prince is much more faithful, his judgment on him far more certain and definite. He says that he was a tyrant, but of all tyrants the most amiable. He acknowledges and extols the versatility, elegance and originality of his intellect. As a politician, he deems him inferior to Cosimo, who in circumstances of greater difficulty incurred fewer dangers, and founded a State that Lorenzo was frequently on the verge of losing. The latter was intensely proud, ruled by distrust and espionage, exalted men of scanty merit, abased others of the greatest authority and credit, and promoted corruption. And Guicciardini states all this with the utmost calm, and without ever betraying the least vehemence either for or against liberty, for or against the Medici.[1]

Now come the Historical Fragments,[2] mere disconnected pages intended to be incorporated in succeeding books which were never completed. On glancing over them, we may easily ascertain in what way they were composed by Machiavelli, and even the method pursued by him in writing the most recent period of his

[1] *Vide* chap ix of his "Storia Fiorentina."

[2] "Opere," vol. i. p. 277 and fol. At p. 340 begins the "Extracts from letters to the Ten of Balia" The editors of the "Opere" (P. M) have published from the Ricci Codex and the Palatine Manuscripts, a so-called new series of "Estratti di lettere ai Dieci" But without fear of making any blunder, we may say, that at least in so far as Machiavelli is concerned, the publication is entirely useless The two first "Estratti" ("Opere" (P. M.), vol. ii. pp. 156–160 and 160–166) are really autographs of Machiavelli, and run from 1494 to 1495. But it is scarcely worth while to publish shapeless and very scanty excerpts from letters, or equally shapeless notes, when we are in possession of the "Frammenti" for the same years, with all the preliminary extracts filled out and corrected by numerous fresh details? Two more "Estratti" follow (Ibid., pp. 166, 167, and 167–182) relative to the years 1495 and 1496. These are not written by Machiavelli, but by Agostino di Terranuova, and they are not extracts from letters addressed to the Ten, but memoranda jotted down in the Chancery of the Ten, regarding letters already written, or about to be written. Machiavelli had nothing to do with these, his sole connection with them being that these memoranda were found among his papers Then, as now, similar memoranda were kept by all *employés* in public offices, and Machiavelli probably found them useful, when he had to ransack the Archives for letters of the Ten. The same may be said of nearly all the succeeding "Estratti."

wounded men, and the pools of blood, are brought vividly before our eyes, and no less graphic is the description of the slaughter committed during the following days by the infuriated populace, stirred to hotter wrath by Lorenzo dei Medici, who was panting for revenge on the conspirators. Francesco dei Pazzi and others were hung from the windows of the Palazzo Vecchio; his aged kinsman, Jacopo, vainly imploring the help of the people, vainly invoking the name of liberty. "The former had been deafened by the fortune and generosity of the Medici, the latter was no longer known in Florence. . . . The limbs of murdered men were to be seen transfixed on pikes, or dragged through the city ways."[1] Jacopo was captured while seeking to escape over the neighbouring hills, nor would the country folk hearken to him when he begged them to kill him for pity's sake. Condemned to death and buried in the family tomb, his body was afterwards exhumed as excommunicate and buried near the walls, only to be again disinterred and dragged through the streets of Florence, by the same halter with which he had been hanged. At last the corpse was thrown into the Arno, where it was long to be seen floating, a loathsome spectacle to all men.[2]

After this most prominent episode, the eighth and last book continues the narrative of other Italian wars and conspiracies, down to the decease of Lorenzo dei Medici in 1492, with which it ends. Machiavelli gives a long description of Lorenzo's character, and has much to say in his praise. He styles him able and fortunate in all things save business matters, which went as badly with him as they had gone well with Cosimo. He alludes in general terms to the public works accomplished by him, to his patronage of letters and art, and to the great reputation in which he was held by all contemporary princes. "The which reputation was daily increased by his own sagacity, for he was eloquent and keen-witted in discourse, wise in resolve, and prompt and courageous in action. Nor can any vice be ascribed to him capable of staining his many virtues, although he was strangely addicted to sensual pleasures, and his delight in the company of facetious and sarcastic men, and in childish diversions was greater than might seem adapted to a person of his consequence."[3]

These eulogies, although for the most part deserved and universally reiterated, are nevertheless very vague and indefinite, since, without many limitations either expressed or understood, it was impossible for Machiavelli to cherish admiration for one

[1] "Opere," vol. ii pp. 216 and 219.
[2] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 220.
[3] Ibid., vol. ii. pp. 273, 274.

tine Types — Nature di nomini fiorentini," are merely four portraits already written and revised, for subsequent insertion in his "Histories," as is plainly evidenced by their construction,[1] and from one or two of them being already incorporated in the "Fragments."

A thousand other proofs may also be found of the extreme care with which Machiavelli polished his style. Among his manuscripts there is a large portion of a sketch of the "Histories," that seems to have gone through several revisions. It has been recently published, and if we compare it with the printed version of the same work, subsequently revised by the author, we shall see that the final corrections were generally simple alterations of style, and can form an idea of the principle upon which they were made. Machiavelli seldom follows the fashion, then so prevalent among literary men, of using elegant words or phrases in order to render his periods more Latinized than in their primitive shape. On the contrary, his corrections aimed at simplifying his style, and by force of simplicity enhancing its vigour and power.[2] The spoken language, with all its native freshness, sometimes even with its idiomatic expressions, is never entirely banished from the "Histories," although he endeavours to give it softness, strength, and polish, by the continual study of Latin classics. The marvellous force and originality of his style is mainly derived from the self-control enabling him to express with limpid truthfulness his most elevated and ardent ideas. And it is in his loftier flights of enthusiasm that he makes use of the most familiar language. Dante Alighieri is likewise most clear and spontaneous in the sublimer Canti of the "Divina Commedia," and accordingly is the greatest of our poets, just as Machiavelli is undoubtedly the best of our prose writers.

This fiery vigour results from the qualities inherent to Machiavelli's mind: from his unfaltering ardour for his country and its

[1] These are their opening sentences. "Thus died Piero Capponi. In his childhood this man (Antonio Giacomini)—The Orators chosen were Messer Francesco dei Pazzi, bishop of Arezzo, and Messer Francesco Pepi, jurisconsult.—Such was the unworthy end of Francesco Pepi."—The portrait of Capponi was already introduced in one of the "Frammenti," although in a less finished shape. Perhaps he had made a separate copy of it, in order to polish and revise it afresh.

[2] These fragments of sketches (of bks. ii., iv., vi and vii) are published in vol. ii of the "Opere" (P M.) with the title: "Frammenti autografi delle Istorie Fiorentine." Signor Passerini hoped at first that he had discovered a part of the finished original of the work; but on being advised of his mistake, he published first the "Histories" and then the rough sketches, without collating them. The latter, therefore, are almost useless, whereas they would have served, with a few variations of the text given in the shape of notes, to exhibit Machiavelli's method of correcting and improving his style.

"Histories." The "Fragments" run from 1494 to 1499, and are divided into two parts, the second and more shapeless of which is entitled: "Estratti di lettere ai Dieci di Balìa." It is known that these magistrates had to receive the communications of the war-commissaries and the ambassadors. Machiavelli's "Estratti" were taken from these letters, and are mere memoranda serving for the composition of his "Frammenti," which in their turn are disconnected scraps of the "Storie," and generally narratives of the wars of the Republic. The "Fragments" are very unequal in style; some being almost finished and polished compositions, while others, on the contrary, are still in the first rough stage of sketchiness. Here and there we even meet with the identical phraseology of the letters upon which they were founded. In fact, we often read: *your* soldiery, *your* ambassadors did or said this or that. Elsewhere, we come across simple reminders for the writer's personal use—"Mem.: to ask Francesco Pepi for an answer to this."[1] And naturally there is still more of the negligence of a first sketch in the "Extract" starting from the year 1497, and principally treating of Tuscan matters and the internal policy of the Republic, although barely outlined by the author, who proposes to examine them more carefully at a future time. "On the eighth day of April, 1498, King Charles died of apoplexy, and on the same day occurred the affair of the friar, of which a detailed account must be given."[2] Elsewhere he refers to projected researches among the letters and documents in the archives: "The whole affair will be found in a letter on the file. There are many letters in file, from which it can be ascertained how and when the enemy's forces came to Marradi."[3]

This method of composing contemporary histories was then very general. Buonaccorsi's Diary is entirely compiled from official letters to the Ten and the Signory; the Diaries of Marin Sanuto are little more than a gigantic collection of ambassadors' letters and reports, with the addition of many others from private individuals. Machiavelli, however, being like Guicciardini, engaged on a history not a diary, was obliged to arrange his materials, and bestow great attention on his style. Hence, after jotting down his memoranda, he worked very carefully upon certain parts of his narrative; then arranged the whole according to a general design, with much re-writing and correction. Even his "Floren-

[1] "Opere," vol. ii. p. 312.

[2] Ibid., vol. ii. p. 350 This is an allusion to Savonarola, who was hung and burnt on the 23rd of that month. The 7th of April was the day of the abortive ordeal by fire, and then came the news of the death of Charles VIII on the same date.

[3] Ibid., vol. ii pp 353 and 361.

affairs of Europe. After his return to Italy, he filled high offices in the service of the popes. He had to govern extensive provinces in very difficult times; he played a very important part in the great events then occurring in Italy, and always proved himself a genuine statesman. This experience and these qualities are alike conspicuous in his work.

Italians had long learnt how to write admirable municipal histories; Guicciardini was the first to compose a really general history of equal merit. To his unrivalled Florentine penetration he added a practical knowledge of the general politics of Italy and the whole of Europe, and an independence and breadth of judgment that was never fettered by local prejudices, never indulged in rash speculations. All this is to be seen in his history and his discourses. While the works of Machiavelli often start from a general conception and are devoted to its demonstration, those of Guicciardini, on the contrary, seek to display the intrinsic nature and connection of facts, to show their causes and nearest results; and only to indicate what is necessary and possible to be done at the given moment, the passing hour.

The frequently repeated adage that the style is the man, is strongly proved in this case. Guicciardini's "Storia Fiorentina," as well as all the "Inedited Works," written in his first youth or amid the whirl of affairs, without any pretence of literary merit, are so graphic, have so spontaneous an elegance, that it might be easy to confuse his style with that of Machiavelli, but for the ardent enthusiasm always animating the latter and never affecting the immoveable serenity of the former. But when Guicciardini set himself to write the "History of Italy," and wished to perform the task with added pomp and dignity, he increased the force and often even the eloquence of his style; but thereby lost his primitive simplicity and became artificial. His laboured phraseology, his too Ciceronian periods are painfully wearisome to the reader. Nor is there any ground for the assertion, that these defects were caused by want of leisure for the correction and revision of his work. On the contrary, it was by too much polish, too much straining after effect that he changed and ruined his style. We find the clearest proofs of this in his original manuscripts, which are corrected and re-copied over and over again.[1] His letters and reports, written on the spur of the moment, are, instead, thoroughly simple and elegant. When he sought to elevate his ideas, and clothe them in more ceremonious and grandiose dress, he could not avoid regarding them with the glance of an outsider

[1] *Vide* the above-mentioned "Observations" on Guicciardini at the end of Appendix (III) of the Italian edition.

freedom. For this is the animating spirit of his "Histories," no less than of his political writings. The patriot and philosopher is never lost in the historian. As we have seen, this is the source of the merits and defects of the work, and will be still more clearly evidenced on comparing it with Guicciardini's "History of Italy." The latter has no theories to demonstrate, is never transported by enthusiasm, is always calm, cool, and impassible. Occasionally, it is true, he yields to an impulse of rather exaggerated self-praise, rather extravagant depreciation of his political opponents; but an irresistible instinct to paint things as they really are, with their causes and immediate results, soon regains the victory, for this is the distinguishing speciality of his intellect. In his autobiographical "Ricordi," Guicciardini exhibits his own weaknesses, the defects and vices of his ancestors, with a frankness that resembles cynicism, but is merely a positive passion for describing men in their naked reality.

And if Guicciardini does not always succeed in discovering the rational connection of the huge multitude of facts which he arrays before us, he never tries to establish an artificial connection between them. He still adheres too much to the annal form, that Machiavelli had already discarded, and thus is continually obliged to interrupt his narrative in order to resume it the following year. This often renders his work very involved and laborious. The history of Italy is far more complex than that of Florence, and so thronged with events that even at the present day we cannot succeed in arranging it in logical sequence and rational unity. But the space of time embraced by Guicciardini is much more limited than that treated in Machiavelli's work. The former writer chiefly devoted himself to contemporary events, in many of which he played a prominent part: his knowledge of these and of the individuals concerned in their accomplishment is always wide and profound There was no scope for hypotheses nor theories, nor even for inquiry into the great laws of history or remote causes of events: all that was needed was a searching and accurate study of reality. And in this Guicciardini is still unrivalled.[1] His researches were numerous, his experience vast; no one could surpass him in the comprehension and delineation of the nature of statesmen, and of the most tangled diplomatic intrigues of his time. Born and educated in Florence, then the chief centre of political activity, acumen and culture, he was sent, in his youth, to the court of Ferdinand the Catholic, where he gained acquaintance with the

[1] The illustrious historian, Leopold Ranke, has expressed a different opinion. *Vide* our remarks upon Guicciardini at the end of Appendix (III.) of the Italian edition.



CHAPTER XV.

Death of Adrian VI.—Election of Clement VII.—Battle of Pavia—Conspiracy of Morone.



WHILE Machiavelli was still engaged upon his uncompleted "Histories," events occurred bringing his literary labours to a sudden close. Serious and unforeseen political complications recalled him to public life for the remaining years of his existence—last years teeming with pain, since he was forced to witness the ruin of his country, and the failure of his own endeavours to mitigate its woes.

The death of Adrian VI. took place on the 14th of September, 1523 The ensuing election was of the highest importance, as the rival influences of France and Spain, already battling in the outer world for the dominion of Italy, were combating each other in the Conclave. It would be easy for the new Pope to weigh down the balance on either side. Therefore the struggle was carried on with the utmost heat; cardinals poured in from all quarters, among them Soderini, who was still a very powerful personage, although only just released from the prison into which Adrian had thrown him. On perceiving how rapidly Giulio dei Medici was gaining ground, backed by the Spanish influence, he at once joined that side, and thus secured his own victory. Accordingly, during the night of the 18–19th of November, Giulio was elected, and immediately assumed the name of Clement VII. Every one knew that he was of illegitimate birth, although he

and at once fell into the vice of artificiality. Machiavelli, on the other hand, found sublimity in all that he felt most profoundly ; in that which was nearest and most akin to his mind. It was then that he rose superior to himself and became increasingly simple and natural. The flame of patriotism burnt more quickly and purely in him than in Guicciardini, and he was the greater writer, because he was the better man of the two, all calumnies of his detractors notwithstanding.



the issue of which might at any moment hinge upon the policy of the Pope.[1]

The Florentines were the first to experience the effects of Clement's vacillating character. Notwithstanding his old acquaintance with them, he began to question every one as to how and by whom they ought to be governed. The majority gave him the reply that he desired, namely, that he should send to Florence Silvio Passerini, Cardinal of Cortona, in company with the two young bastards Ippolito and Alessandro dei Medici, and authorize him to rule the city in their name. But Passerini, being a man of extremely harsh manners, was totally unfitted for the post. Ippolito dei Medici, supposed to be the child of Giuliano and a woman of Pesaro, was barely sixteen years of age. Alessandro, who was still younger, was the son of Lorenzo and a black or mulatto slave, and had his mother's dark skin, thick lips, and frizzy hair. These two boys were the last descendants of the elder Medici branch. Giovanni, already well known and soon to be famous as the captain of the Black Bands, belonged to a collateral branch of the family, and was never in favour with the Pope.

Certain citizens of considerable weight, such as Jacopo Salviati, Francesco Vettori and Roberto Acciaiuoli, openly disapproved the idea of Florence being governed by the Cardinal of Cortona, and plainly told the Pope that, as to Ippolito and Alessandro, it would be far better just now to send them to school to see if they could be trained as statesmen. Why not, they added, allow the Florentines to govern themselves under his protection; why not throw open the Council hall as he had so often talked of doing? But Clement VII. preferred the advice of those who seconded his own wishes, and saying that he deemed it best to adopt the views of the majority, despatched the boys and the Cardinal to Florence. As a natural consequence, the latter speedily excited general hatred, and this hatred was afterwards directed against all the Medici, and went on increasing until at last it developed into open rebellion.[2]

Elsewhere, events of still graver importance were now in course of preparation. The grand struggle between Spaniards and French was on the point of decision by the sword. The latter withdrew

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," *loc. cit*, pp. 79-85; Ranke, "History of the Popes" (translated from the German), London, Bohn, vol. i. pp 80, 81. At this point Ranke is in agreement with Guicciardini, who gives an admirable description of the character of Clement VII.; Gregorovius, "Geschichte," &c., vol viii. p. 413 and fol.; Capponi, "Storia," vol. ii. p 344; Vettori, "Sommario della Storia d'Italia," p 381.

[2] Vettori, "Sommario," pp 349, 350

did his utmost to conceal it. It is said that fortune smiles on bastards; nevertheless it was as hostile to him, as it had been in every way favourable to Leo X. Even the worst-considered matters turned out well for that Pontiff, whereas the most carefully planned schemes of Clement VII. came to an evil ending His reign was no less fatal to himself than to Florence, to Italy, and to the Church.

At the moment of assuming the tiara, Clement was reported to be a pious man, of virtuous life, extremely clearheaded, untiringly laborious, and with much knowledge of affairs and human passions. All believed him to have been the guide of Leo X., and to have a far greater capacity for rule. But Leo X., notwithstanding his love of pleasure and dislike of fatigue, had possessed a certain political instinct enabling him to adopt the gravest resolves without undue hesitation. He had only made use of Cardinal Giulio to obtain required information, undertake necessary inquiries, and execute his own decisions. For the latter was so convenient an instrument as to appear to lead the ruler that he served. "In this manner," remarks Guicciardini, "the affairs manipulated by these two very different natures, served to prove how opportune may be sometimes the mixture of two contraries." [1]

When Clement VII. was called upon to direct the affairs of the Church singlehanded, it was soon discovered that he was absolutely devoid of the faculty constituting the practical genius of statesmen, which, by leading them to take an almost instinctive reckoning of the unforeseen, urges them to rapid resolve. Timid and irresolute, he shrank from all great responsibility, and this weakness of character, that now became fatal to him, was increased by the nature of his intellect, which, at the most critical moments, spent itself in lengthy meditation on the *pros* and *cons* of every possible decision. And as if that were not enough, he chose for his counsellors two men of opposed sentiments: the one an Italian, Giovan Battista Giberti; the other a German, Niccolò Schomberg. The latter, who had been a monk in the days of Savonarola, and afterwards Archbishop of Capua, was keen, tenacious, impetuous, and an ardent partisan of Spanish policy; he dominated the Pope, and was almost feared by him. Giberti, on the contrary, won his master's affection, was guided rather by impulse and passion than by reason, so that after being first a determined adversary of France, he afterwards became as warm a promoter of her interests It is easy to understand the great peril involved in seeing the Papal throne occupied by a man bewildered by so many uncertainties, such opposing influences, on the eve of a gigantic conflict,

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol viii bk xvi p 73

into the French camp, by a breach made during the night in the wall of the park surrounding the encampment; De Leyva made a sortie from Pavia; the French, who were already prepared, moved forward in order of battle. At first victory seemed to smile upon them; but then Pescara, at the head of the Spanish harquebusiers, succeeded in routing their men-at-arms. Frundsberg gave equal proofs of valour with his landsknechts, and De Leyva joined the others in the general attack. The Swiss at Marignano had already begun to lose their prestige of invincibility, and now at Pavia they fell into confusion, and before long victory declared for the imperial forces. France lost her best captains on this field; her valiant army was defeated, and ten thousand corpses lay scattered on the road between Pavia and the Certosa.[1] But the crowning blow was the capture of Francis I. on the battle-field. It was on this occasion that he wrote to his mother, the Queen Regent, the celebrated words: "I have lost all, save my honour and my life which has been spared."[2] Pescara de Leyva and Frundsberg were the heroes of this battle, a more decisive one than any fought for centuries,[3] inasmuch as it rendered Charles V. the most powerful sovereign in Europe and the arbiter of Italy, whose independence was now truly lost

A short time after the battle of Pavia a very strange incident occurred that has been related and interpreted in various ways by different historians Among other things it proves very clearly that the Italians had not only recognized the desperate strait they were in, but yearned for deliverance from it, and that the idea formulated by Machiavelli in the exhortation to his "Prince," was also, if in a vaguer and lesser degree, the idea of many of his compatriots. Nevertheless, they lacked the qualities required to translate it into action. They all distrusted one another, only

[1] Prof. de Leva speaks of 8,000, Mignet of 10,000, Gregorovius of 12,000 slain. Guicciardini states it to have been generally believed that more than 8,000 French perished by the sword, or by drowning in the Ticino.

[2] "Madame, pour vous faire savoir comment se porte le reste de mon infortune, de toutes choses ne m'est demeuré que l'honneur et la vie, qui est saulve." These were the precise words penned by the king. "Papiers d'État du Cardinal Granvelle," vol. i. p. 250. Aimé Champollion-Figeac, "Captivité du roi François I," p 129 *Vide* also Mignet, "Rivalité," &c, vol. ii p 68; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. ii. p. 242. Tradition has somewhat altered the king's words, attributing these to him instead: "Tout est perdu, fors l'honneur!"

[3] "Sie est das grossartigste Schlachtenbild des XVI. Jahrhunderts, von homerischer Erhabenheit. Eine weltgeschichtliche Katastrophe hat sich darin concentrirte," Gregorovius, "Geschichte der Stadt Rom," vol. viii p. 34; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. ii. chap. iv.; Mignet, "Rivalité," &c, vol. ii chap vii. The French work makes too little account of Italian works on this subject, and especially as regards the very conscientious work of Prof. de Leva, which is based on original research.

from Lombardy, and the former advanced full of revived daring. They had valiant captains; for Charles V. did not choose his leaders, as the French often chose them, at the instance of feminine wiles or court intrigues Among these leaders were Antonio de Leyva and the Marquis of Pescara, both of Neapolitan birth but Spanish origin, and men of the highest courage. There was the celebrated Constable de Bourbon, whose desertion of France and his sovereign had made so much noise; and there was the Viceroy of Naples, Viscount de Lannoy, who was of Flemish birth. King Francis I., determined to put an end to all uncertainty, crossed the Alps with an army of fifty thousand men. On the 26th of October, 1524, he made his entry into Milan; then went to Pavia, where Antonio de Leyva was shut up with four thousand foot, and where the great quarrel was now to be decided. The Spaniards did all in their power to gain the Pope to their side; but as usual he hesitated. He could not desire the victory of either the French or the Spaniards, since in any case he would be at the mercy of the conqueror, who would naturally become the arbiter of Italy's fate. In fact, the interests of the States of the Church were now inevitably identified with the Italian national independence, and this gave great weight to the policy of the Pope. But neither Leo X. nor Clement VII. ever dared to soar to the lofty plane towards which it seemed that events must perforce impel them. Although the best politicians of Italy, and Machiavelli in particular, made a thousand efforts to stimulate and spur them on, yet they never rose above trickery and subterfuge.

Francis I. was strongly entrenched in his camp, while fresh German forces were pouring in to swell the enemy's ranks. He was still at the head of a numerous army, although he had despatched the Duke of Albany, with three thousand foot and two thousand horse, to the south of Italy; his Grisons troops had gone to defend the castle of Chiavenna, and his reinforcements from France had been scattered on the road. He had the main body of the enemy in front, and Antonio de Leyva in his rear. And the latter had already made some fortunate sallies, in one of which the valiant Giovanni dei Medici had been gravely wounded, and thus put *hors de combat* for some time. Provisions were beginning to fail in Pavia, money to run short in the imperial camp. Everything, therefore, might have shown the king the expediency of waiting, and avoiding a pitched engagement. But Pescara, being pressed for time, daily provoked him by well-contrived skirmishes, so that at last he deemed it cowardly to longer refuse battle. On the morning of the 24th of February, 1525, Pescara forced his way



seeking, only hoping for foreign assistance. There was no man really capable of taking the lead in the great enterprise; and of all men the least fitted was Pope Clement VII., whom fate, as if in irony, seemed to persistently thrust into the part of representative of the noblest national aspirations.

On the 1st of April, 1525, the imperialists, who although victorious, had exhausted their treasury, made an agreement, binding both the contending parties to defend Milan from every hostile attack. The States of the Church, Florence and the Medici remained under the protection of the Emperor, to whom the Florentines—and this was the essential point—were to pay the sum of 100,000 ducats. But the insolence of the conquerors, their continual plundering and imposition of fines, were in no way checked by this agreement, but on the contrary daily augmented. Hence the Italians were increasingly disgusted and irritated at being handed over from one master to another, and could not resign themselves to being henceforth utterly at the mercy of the imperialists, who, already dominant in Naples, were now victorious in Lombardy. But this discontent, however general, was entirely impotent. The only powers in a condition to offer any resistance were the Venetians and the Pope. But the former only thought of their trade and their colonies; the second could neither dare nor decide to do anything.

Meanwhile the government of France was in the hands of the Queen Regent, Louise of Savoy, whose behests were received with unanimous compliance by a nation burning to resume the war in order to avenge their king and deliver him from captivity. This general thirst for revenge, this desire to retaliate beyond the Alps, gave hope to the Italians. And the Regent, being aware of this, seized the opportunity to inform the Duke of Milan, through his brother, Maximilian Sforza, and the Venetians by other means, that she was ready to assist any general revolt against the imperial rule in Italy, to renounce on the part of France all pretension to the Neapolitan throne, and to leave Lombardy to the Duke. The same proposal was made to the Pope, who instantly welcomed it with greater ardour than the others. Now, he thought, he could see a possibility of the national war of independence that had so often been suggested and discussed. Many had declared and now again repeated to him that this war would be the salvation of his States and confer upon him the glorious title of Deliverer of Italy, which Giulio II. had, at one time, hoped to obtain, and that even Leo X. had frequently professed to covet.[1] The Datary, Giovan Matteo Giberti, was the man who chiefly encouraged and urged

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," bk. xiv. vol. vii. pp. 4, 5.

that he was ready to prove the truth of this assertion at the sword's point.[1] He seemed even to be irritated against the Emperor, believing him to have sanctioned the Viceroy's proceedings. For these reasons Sauli found a willing hearer, when he spoke to Morone of the proposed league, and in the name of the Pope and the Datary, suggested the idea of offering the kingdom of Naples to the angry and discontented Pescara, on condition of his frankly adhering to the league and assuming its military direction[2] Sforza's secretary seemed enchanted by the proposal, and from that moment became the chief manipulator of the plot, and the leading agitator of Italian politics, without, however, ceasing to urge the Emperor to grant the investiture of the dukedom to his own lord. He, too, and even more than the rest, was anxious to keep open a way of retreat, that might at any moment become a necessity. He contrived to do all this in a way of his own and one befitting his strange character, singular intellect and audacity, and the faithlessness that was no less conspicuous in him than in all other politicians of the age. The result was a dark and shadowy drama long shrouded in mystery, and that even at this day, after prolonged research and the discovery of many new documents, has not been entirely made clear.

Morone was Machiavelli's junior by one year only; he had studied Latin and Greek literature and jurisprudence. Then, entering on a political and administrative career, he served many different masters in the capacity of secretary, chancellor, &c. He made rapid way upon this road, since besides possessing intellect, he was not only of an audacious and enterprising character, but of enormous cleverness in penetrating the windings of diplomacy, and thus speedily gained the name of having one of the best heads in Italy. In 1499, when Lodovico Sforza took to flight, Morone was his secretary, and arranged the terms of the surrender; and although these were not accepted by the French invaders of Lombardy, he was soon after taken into their service. Later, he promoted the choice of Lodovico's son Massimiliano as Duke of Milan, and served him faithfully, zealously, and courageously until the young Sforza, worn out by his numerous trials, resigned himself to perpetual banishment in France. After undergoing many other vicissitudes Morone worked hard, when the imperial fortunes were again in the ascendant in Italy, to procure the nomination of Sforza, Lodovico's second son, to the dukedom of Milan. He became secretary to the new prince, and negotiated in his name for the investiture of the duchy, first

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol viii. bk xvi. p 52.
[2] Morone's "Esame." Dandolo, "Ricordi," &c, pp 152–159.

to push on these negotiations with France, he was at the same time urging the Italian potentates to venture on the enterprise, even without any help from abroad. But France, while strenuously inciting Italy to revolt and war, gave her no help beyond words. And being engaged in negotiations for the release of the king, her policy was liable to change at any moment. As for the Italians, they not only distrusted France, but distrusted one another, without any exception; and therefore every one sought to keep open a way of escape in case the rest should draw back. Consequently all endeavoured to give more or less direct warning of the plot to Charles V. or his representatives, in order to be able on emergency to declare themselves his faithful friends. This did not, however, prevent them from continuing the negotiations they had begun, being resolved to profit by them if matters succeeded, as the phrase then went, *ad votum*. Such was the policy of the period. Charles V. and his followers behaved with equal falsity, as we shall speedily see. The Venetians approved, but said that their decision depended upon that of the Pope. The latter, who had been the first to encourage the secret bargain, now showed equal eagerness in warning the Emperor to keep good watch over his captains in Italy.[1] The Duke of Milan turned a favourable ear to the French suggestions; but he, too, by means of the secretary, Morone, immediately gave notice of them to the Viceroy, who advised him to continue the negotiations, to see to what they might lead.[2] Meanwhile, Morone, on his side, was finessing to obtain from the Emperor the investiture of the duchy for Sforza.

At last arrived Domenico Sauli, the Genoese, bearing from Rome the definite proposal for an Italian league against the imperialists. The moment appeared to be singularly propitious. Francis I. had asked to be taken to Spain for an interview with Charles V., and the Viceroy had conducted him there without the knowledge of Bourbon and Pescara, who were hotly opposed to the measure, since from motives of personal interest they preferred to keep him in Italy. Pescara was specially furious against the Viceroy, and accused him in his wrath of having shown cowardice at Pavia, by his frequent cries of: "We are lost!" He added

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. viii. bk. xvi. p. 56. This writer tells us that the Pope was continually filled by suspicion and anxiety, and accordingly, "from no intent to betray the negotiations, but merely to prepare a refuge in case the thing failed, paid the Kaiser the kind service of advising him to keep his captains in a good humour." These warnings were conveyed in a "Memoriale mandato d'ordine del Papa Clemente VII, a Monsignor Farnese." *Vide* "Papiers d'État du Cardinal Granvelle," vol. i p. 295; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. ii. p. 287.

[2] Morone also declares this in his "Esame." Dandolo, "Ricordi," &c., p. 152.

modern history. Although with less eloquence he must then have expounded the identical ideas expressed at the conclusion of the "Prince."

But his listener was a soldier equally insensible to eloquence and historic memories, and with no eye but for the present and present realities. Pescara was aware of the strength of the imperial arms, the weakness of those of the Italians always at discord among themselves, always suspicious of one another; and he also knew how little reliance could be placed in the promised assistance of France, who for the sake of releasing her king might at any moment be brought to submit to any conditions. Besides, he was suffering from a malady that must shortly carry him to the tomb. Consequently he had no inclination to accept bills at a long date. But neither was he a man to decidedly reject the highly flattering promises made to him by Morone in the name of the Pope and of other powers. For, in conclusion, either the enterprise might succeed, in which case he would certainly have been ready to accept the offer, or there might be no possibility of making it succeed, and even in this case it suited him to feign consent to and complicity in the plot, in order to turn to account his knowledge of it by disclosing it to the Emperor. Meanwhile, too, he might be able to extract money from the allies; and this was pressingly needed for his army, which was destitute of everything. Accordingly, after binding himself to secrecy and learning the proposed plans, he neither accepted nor refused the leadership of the enterprise, but hastened to point out the grave difficulties in the way, declaring that first of all he must be certain of not having to violate the rules of honour by which he was bound as a soldier and vassal of the Emperor. He would have the case examined by competent persons; advised Sforza and the Pope to do the same, although of course in general terms, without naming any one, in order that no hint of the precious secret might leak out. The replies of the Pope and Sforza were not long in coming, although the inquiry bore too much the appearance of an empty pretext The generals of that period never held themselves bound by national ties, and least of all could the Neapolitan Pescara have any duties towards Spain and the Empire. He was only bound by those duties as a vassal to which he had in fact alluded. But he was instantly asked to remember that Naples was a fief of the Church, and that, if disposed, he might at once renounce his possessions in Spain for the sake of

vita pubblica di Girolamo Morone," collected and edited by Giuseppe Muller, p 358 and fol This is the third vol of the "Miscellanea" by the Turin Royal Association of National History. Vol ii. contains the "Lettere ed Orazioni Latine di Girolamo Morone," edited by Domenico Promis and Giuseppe Muller.

offered by the Emperor on inadmissible conditions which were afterwards modified and accepted. At the same time he took a most active part in the conspiracy by negotiating with the Pope concerning the Italian league with France against the Empire. He undertook the task of winning over Pescara, and had already plunged into the work with so much zeal, showing himself so convinced of success and pursuing it so hotly, that he was long considered the original author of a design that, on the contrary, had been first conceived in Rome.

At this time Pescara was reputed to be the foremost general in Europe. A very ambitious and wholly unscrupulous man, he was now irritated by the departure of Francis I., and also by the idea that he was insufficiently appreciated by the Emperor. Although of Spanish origin, and an enemy of the Italian name, he was yet a native of Italy, and could not be supposed to be utterly callous regarding the fate of his own country. At all events, the promise of a great kingdom seemed a sufficient bait to lure him to the cause. Morone had immense confidence in his own intellect and eloquence, and accordingly never doubted of being able to seduce the ambitious soldier by the prospect of a royal crown; the exacerbated spirit by the offer of means of revenging himself, liberating his country, establishing his fortunes, and acquiring immortal renown. He therefore sought an interview with Pescara, and after demanding and obtaining his pledged word as an honourable soldier to preserve secrecy in any case, he revealed the design of his partners in the league, and laid the great proposal before him, inviting him to be the leader of the enterprise. He reminded him of the universal suffering and oppression of Italy, and her need of a deliverer; gave a vivid picture of the glory of liberating the country, the happiness of possessing a kingdom, the holiness of a war desired by the people, assisted by France, and blessed by the Pope. He referred to the examples of ancient [1] and

[1] This is how Pescara described the interview in one of his letters to the Emperor: "Y dende algunos dias vyno Hieronimo Moron a hablarme per grandes arodeos y ultimamente dezirme que sy yo le prometia la fe de le tener secreto, que el me dyria y descubriria grandes cosas. Yo le dixe que le ternia secreto, y le dj la fe. Descubriome el mal contentamyento de toda Italia, y como toda ella disponya y determynava salyr de sugecyon, y de Francia abya grande correspondencia y requyrymyentos, y que sy yo querya sentirme de como me avyan tratado, y de la forma con que procuravan y abyan syempre procurado abaxarme, y acordarme que abia nacydo Italiano, y que glorya podia ganar en ser el libertador de la propria patria, que en my mano era ser la cabeça y el capytan de toda esta empresa, y que el creya, que todos concorreryan en darme el reyno de Napoles, y que abia tan grandes cosas y tan grandes cymyentos, que yo veria que era razon de venyr cuello y que podria byen salyr lo que se desiñava." Letter of the 30th of July, 1526, duplicate of one of the 25th, in the "Documenti che concernono la

The negotiations were actively pushed on; but France did not stir, and gave only verbal assistance.[1] Pescara continually demanded more money, which it was necessary to give him; and meanwhile it became known, to the surprise of all, that more landsknechts were pouring down from the Alps. Then it was repeated on all sides that the Emperor was already aware of the conspiracy. In fact, Pescara had kept him informed of everything by frequent despatches, pressing him to come to terms with France without delay, because all the world in Italy was against him, all yearning to drive away his army, and that there was a universal hatred for the German and Spanish name[1] Giberti's letters clearly show us, how it was known in Rome that the conspiracy was no longer a secret for any one, and it was surmised that Morone had played the traitor as well as Pescara[2] As soon as the Duke fell seriously ill, Morone declared to Pescara that he would rather yield the duchy to the Emperor than procure the restoration of Massimiliano Sforza, who had proved himself so incapable of its government. Nor did he confine himself to words; for, although the Venetians and the Pope, with whom he was then plotting, had proclaimed themselves entirely hostile to the idea, he had prepared everything for the execution of his plan in the event of the Duke's demise.[3] No one, however, had ever calculated upon the good faith of Morone and Pescara, but rather upon their selfishness and ambition. It was thought that if the conspiracy had really any chance of success, both had too much to gain to be likely to abandon it; but it was always expected that they would betray it and apply to the Emperor the moment that probability should fail. Accordingly, their main cause for anxiety and discouragement consisted in the arrival of the landsknechts, the non-arrival of any succour from France, and the absence of all present hope of obtaining it.

There was also mutual suspicion between Pescara and Morone.

[1] See the correspondence of Pescara with Charles V. in vol. iii of the before-quoted "Miscellanea di Storia Italiana"

[2] The Datary, Giberti, wrote to Sauli in a letter of the 19th of September, 1525, how from many quarters the Pope had been warned that Morone and Pescara were betraying him, and that many persons alluded to the negotiations carried on by the allies, and related their minutest details, so that it was plain that all was now public. This naturally gave rise to the gravest suspicions. Nevertheless Giberti still trusted or feigned to trust in Pescara, and still more in Morone, being unwilling to credit that they could be ignorant of the immense advantages to be reaped from the success of the conspiracy. "Lettere ai Principi," vol. ii. at sheets 91 and 92.

[3] He declares this himself in his "Esame," pp. 175–177, and Pescara also states it most emphatically in his letters to Charles V. *Vide* letter 8th of September, 1525, to be again quoted later on

obtaining a kingdom. Positively, according to the ideas of the period, there was nothing extraordinarily unusual in the proposal now made to him. Had not Bourbon deserted France to enter the imperial service? Had not the Prince of Orange done the same, and had not Pietro Navarro gone over to the French camp from pique against Spain? Although posterity stigmatized these men as traitors to their respective countries, yet they were still numbered at that day among the most esteemed and respected captains, and as merely deserving a certain modicum of blame for having forsaken their natural rulers.[1] Assuredly, Pescara was not one to pretend to nicer scruples than other men, and had he really desired to change his flag, might easily have found reasons or pretexts for discontent, especially when instigated thereto by the Pope.

[1] On this subject it is useful to refer to the essay of Mons. Ch. Paillard in the "Revue Historique," iii année, tome viii. (7th of December, 1878) pp 297–367, "Documents relatifs aux projets d'évasion de Francois I, prisonnier à Madrid, ainsi qu' à la situation intérieure de la France en 1525, en 1542, et en 1544." At page 316, the author remarks that notwithstanding the very grave injuries suffered by the Constable de Bourbon at the hands of Francis I. and the Queen Regent, they did not serve to excuse an act of treason endangering the safety, not only of the royal authority, but of the nation itself "Toutefois on se tromperait singulièrement, si l'on pensait que Bourbon ait été jugé par les contemporains comme il l'a été par la posterité; si l'on supposait que lui même ait senti sur sa tête ce poids inéluctable de honte, de mépris, de reprobation et de haine, dont aujourd'hui tout traitre a pleinement conscience . . . A cetté époque, l'idée de patrie, aujourd'hui si puissante et pour ainsi dire souveraine, existait à peine, ou du moins était fort obscurie par l'idée féodale, encore dominante. . . . Sismondi a sur ce point un mot tout à fait topique: Les lettres des plus grands seigneurs de cetté époque, où il est question du connêtable, ne laissent pas, dit il, entrevoir de blâme." In Italy, where feudal traditions had far less power, and especially in Florence, where the Republic had greatly forwarded the development of the national idea, historians were more severe in their judgment of Bourbon; yet even they generally speak of his treason to his sovereign, not to his country. Vettori, after relating Bourbon's death under the walls of Rome, adds: "A man undeserving of so honourable a death, after the treason done to his master" ("Sommario della Storia d'Italia," p. 379). Guicciardini (vol. viii. bk. xvi. p 72) says that although in Spain the Bourbon was received with great honour and as a brother-in-law by Charles V, yet that the nobles of the court "abhorred him as an infamous person, styling him a traitor to his own king."

[1] On the 5th of October, G. Batta Sanga wrote to the French ambassador in Venice: "*Parturient montes, nascitur ridiculus mus.* I think that I may well begin in this manner, since this resolution announced by the French so many days ago, as though it were the advent of the Messiah, of sending help to Italy, has proved to be much less than that which they sent to offer by means of Lorenzo Toscano Surely they cannot deem all Italians such fools as, in the simple hope of their good faith, to give themselves tied and bound into their hands, in order to improve their position with Cæsar, which, it may be suspected, is probably their real object, this offer being as generally known at Court, as though it were only intended to inspire Cæsar with alarm" ("Lettere ai Principi," vol. ii p. 94[1]).

came to interrogate him, accompanied by De Leyva and the Abbot of Nazaria. There was little either to be asked or answered, for Pescara already knew all, and knew it from Morone's own lips. Nevertheless the latter wrote his confession with his own hand. After protesting in this against the unjust violence to which he had been subjected, and against this violation of good faith, he told the imperial general that he could reveal nothing more than what he had frequently said and repeated He then traced the whole history of the conspiracy, recalling the offer of the Neapolitan kingdom, and the negotiations for conferring the investiture of Milan upon Sforza, who had declared his acceptance of it, while carrying on his arrangements for a national war against the Emperor.[1] This last declaration was the pretext of which Pescara availed himself to go straight to Milan and take possession of Lombardy.

And now from one moment to another every one was expecting to hear that Morone had already been put to death, when, to the universal amazement, Pescara published a decree of the 27th of October to the effect that he intended to hold the person of the prisoner in his own keeping, and ordaining that the latter's possessions should not be confiscated but left in the hands of his wife and children, who were to be treated with every respect.[2] Then, feeling that his end was near, for he died in fact on the 3rd of December, 1525, at the early age of thirty-six years, he made a will, in which he recommended not only the life but the liberty of Morone to the Emperor's mercy, imploring every possible benefit in his behalf, "since otherwise I should hold myself guilty."[3] The Abbot of Nazaria and the Marquis del Vasto wrote in singular haste to Morone to inform him that Pescara had recommended

it is to be found either in the "Rapporto" of Rosso dell' Olmo, 17th of October, 1525 (in Marin Sanuto, vol xi. p. 71), or in the "Cronica" of Grumello For in fact there was no longer any secret to be discovered, all being as well known to De Leyva as to Pescara.

[1] Morone's "Esame."

[2] *Vide* the decree in Dandolo, "Ricordi," &c., pp. 201, 202.

[3] "Item. I bequeath you Hieronimo Morone, who is now in prison, and I would pressingly supplicate your Imperial Majesty to grant him his life and every other benefit possible, and I would that nought of that which I have discovered to the advantage of your Majesty should be held as a condemnation of the above mentioned prisoner, even allowing that he may have failed to do that which he should have done. Your Majesty will graciously grant my request, since otherwise I should hold myself guilty ('perchè altrimenti me reputerei essere caricato')" (Dandolo, "Ricordi," p. 202). It is impossible to ascertain with any certainty what was "quelle opera che doveva fare;" it may possibly be an allusion to some promise made to Pescara by Morone during the progress of the conspiracy, or while he was in prison. It is certain that he promised a large sum of money as a ransom, and was then unable to pay it all at once.

The latter knew himself to be greatly detested by the Spaniards, above all by De Leyva, who had threatened to murder him if he could get him into his hands He knew Pescara well, and had said to Guicciardini: "that there was no one in Italy of greater malignity or less good faith than he."[1] From all sides warnings came to him to stand on his guard or he would come to a sad end in Pescara's hands. He himself spoke of these rumours to the *marquis*, but wound up by declaring: "I trust in your Excellency, as I trust in God."[2] And the imperial captain, in his letters to Charles V. revealing the conspiracy and the promises and speeches made to him by Morone, said that he still felt sure of leading him as he chose.[3] In truth they were both playing a double game, and were both aware of it. Pescara had allowed it to be understood that he would not hesitate to take the thing in hand could he feel assured of the crown that was promised to him; but that he had never been able to deceive himself so far as to believe in the possibility of obtaining it. Morone, on the contrary, had been far more credulous; although less so than was supposed. He was not blind to the difficulties obstructing the enterprise, and knew that he risked his head if he should unduly compromise Pescara. Yet his knowledge of the latter's secret desires helped to reassure him, and, on the other hand, he had clearly given Pescara to understand, that, should the enterprise really prove to be hopeless, he too would be ready to throw himself heart and soul into the Emperor's cause. For these reasons, when invited to the Castle of Novara for a conference with Pescara, who was then ill, he accepted and went there, in the company of De Leyva, although warned by every one that he was rushing on his destruction[4]

On the 13th of October he had a first interview with Pescara, a second on the 15th, and was then taken prisoner[5] on his way out, and conveyed to the Castle of Pavia. On the 24th Pescara

[1] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. viii bk xvi p 67.

[2] "Miscellanea" already quoted, vol iii p. 407; letter of the 5th of September, 1525; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol ii. p. 295

[3] Pescara wrote to the Emperor, in his letter of the 8th of September, 1525 "Tengo por fe, que si el duque muere, que Geronimo Moron harà ultimo de potencia en servicio de V. M., pero en esto trova ruyn todo el posible: es verdad que muestra enteramente fiar de mj, y siempre lo traygo a lo que quiero" ("Miscellanea," &c., vol. iii. pp. 422, 423).

[4] Guicciardini, "Storia d'Italia," vol. viii. bk. xvi. pp 66, 67; De Leva, "Storia di Carlo V.," vol. ii pp. 295, 296.

[5] Guicciardini (*loc. cit.*, p 67) and many other historians declare that during the conversation between Pescara and Morone, Antonio de Leyva was listening behind the arras where the marquis had concealed him. But De Leva ("Storia," vol. ii. p. 297) refuses, we think rightly, to credit this tale, because no mention of

The result of all this was to involve men's minds in numberless doubts, numberless uncertainties as to Morone's character, and the true meaning of the conspiracy. And these doubts and uncertainties swelled to exaggerated proportions when attempts were made to discover a great patriot in a man whose sole and unceasing aim was to make his way in the world, and who had always changed sides to suit the personal interests prompting his every act. Regarded as a patriot, his conduct remains as absolutely inexplicable as that of Pescara, De Leyva, and De Bourbon. How was it that Morone, in the face of general warning, and with certain knowledge that Pescara was now in perfect agreement with the Emperor, ventured to place himself in the former's power? And how was it that Pescara spared and recommended him? To attribute conscientious scruples to the marquis would be a sheer absurdity. He had never been possessed of any, and there was no reason for his conceiving any then, after never having had them before. It would be still more impossible to imagine that scruples of any kind could have inspired the conduct of De Leyva, Bourbon, or Charles V. himself, for they had held out no promises, and were not called upon to show any tenderness towards a conspirator. Morone was never credited with patriotism by the contemporaries who knew him, nor even by those who urged him to join the conspiracy. Guicciardini, in his "History of Italy," professes himself unable to comprehend the blindness prompting Morone to deliver himself into the hands of Pescara, whose cruelty and falsehood were so well known to him. But the same historian, on hearing of his imprisonment, wrote to Rome in one of his "Legazioni": "I fear that by means of his weathercock policy (*girandole*), he will soon contrive to counsel and direct the imperialists to the hurt of the allies;"[2] and so indeed it fell out.

But although his contemporaries could only judge Morone by their personal knowledge of him, the documents brought to light in our own day enable us to see more clearly how matters really went. Morone, who had served many masters, and was quite ready to serve more, was studying how to gain additional power under the Duke of Milan, when the plan of the league and the offer of the Neapolitan kingdom to Pescara, were communicated to him from Rome. Both league and war harmonized with

reader to a careful monograph on Morone, by Signor G. E. Saltini of the Florence Archives, published in the "Archivio Storico Italiano," series iii. vol. viii part i. pp. 59-126, of the year 1868.

[2] Guicciardini, "Opere Inedite," vol. viii. p. 331, letter of the 23rd of October, 1525, dated from Faenza.

him to Charles V. and added that he might rely upon their good offices in his favour. And even De Leyva, who had never had any liking for him, wrote to him from Milan on the 25th of March, 1526, in the following terms:

"It shall be contrived that your Excellency may rest satisfied. So, once more I pray you to be of good cheer, for I will do for you all that I would were done for myself, and I recommend myself to you."[1] Nevertheless, Morone was detained in prison at the pleasure of the Constable de Bourbon, who had assumed the command of the imperial army, and kept him as a hostage, in order to obtain money, of which he was now in the utmost need. After extracting many thousand ducats from Morone in this way, as well as a bond for the sum of twenty thousand more, on the 1st of January, 1527, he signed a decree in which, although charging him with conspiracy, and accusing him of unjust extortion of coin for his private advantage, he extolled his talent, courage, and experience and the services formerly rendered by him to the Emperor. He concluded by stating that in consideration of these merits, of the money recently supplied by him at a moment of extreme need, and of his declared purpose of again rendering useful service to the Emperor, he released Morone and granted him full pardon for all his crimes.[2] And, in addition to this, he shortly after nominated him commissary general to the imperial forces. In fact, we find Morone doing the duties of this office under the walls of Rome, at the time of Bourbon's death. Then came the sack of the Eternal City, and while Clement VII. was shut up in the Castle of St. Angelo, Morone played a very prominent part in the negotiations carried on for the Pope's release. By the aid of his talent, energy, and experience he rose higher and higher; became as it were the guiding spirit of the evils wreaked upon Italy by the imperialists, and was in the camp of the army besieging Florence, on the last day of his life, the 15th of December, 1530[3]

[1] *Vide* the letter in Dandolo, "Ricordi," &c, p 204.

[2] "Privilegium, gratia et restitutio clarissimi com." H. Moroni, in Dandolo's "Ricordi," &c., p 209 and fol.: "Ut negari non possit eum ipsum non mediocrem partem habuisse in victoriis quibus. S. C M Italiam potitus est. . . . Animadvertentes praeterea eiusdem comitis H. Moroni præcipuas animi dotes, ingenti acumen, longum rerum arduarum et grandium usum, animi fortitudinem et inviolabilem erga eos principes fidem, quibus aliquando servitutem suam obtulit et dicavit. . . . Accessit præterea ut in præsentibus rei pecuniariæ necessitatibus, et in tanto sustinendorum exercituum oneri, cum nihil sit magis necessarium pecuniæ, eæque consumptus sint ingentes et fere intollerabiles, is ipse comes Hieronimus de notabili pecuniarum quantitate nobis subvenit et subventurus est," &c.

[3] Besides the various works from which we have quoted, we may refer the

the promotion of local or personal interests, than from any general and strongly felt need of a common country. Therefore it was impossible for it to lead to any great and durable result. Even Machiavelli himself had no clear perception of the idea, so long as he remained secretary to the Republic, and indeed showed himself ready to sacrifice everything to the interests of his own little city. But once out of office he was the only man to discern this idea, and to realize it intensely without hesitation or dubiety of purpose. He then expounded it with lofty eloquence, and sought to convert others to the same faith. Accordingly, from that time forward his energies were spent in passing from illusion to illusion, from hope to hope, doomed to behold the fading of the dreams by which he was unceasingly dominated. But we have no reason to believe that he ever cherished the most transient illusion as to the conduct of Morone, although the conspiracy might almost seem to have been inspired by the "Prince" and the "Discourses" No one of the participators in it had a shade of the energetic and honest patriotism that Machiavelli knew to be the most essential requisite for the achievement of the great idea.

NOTE.

Some remarks on F. Guicciardini's "History of Italy."

We have frequently referred to Guicciardini, and while largely profiting by his "Storia d'Italia," have refrained from giving a minute analysis of the work, both on account of its length and because it was written long after Machiavelli was dead. But it is incumbent on us to examine the remarks of Prof. Leopold von Ranke concerning this "History," not only on account of their author's importance, but because they have some bearing on events related by ourselves on the authority of Guicciardini.

The eminent German historian published his remarks on Guicciardini in 1824, in an early work entitled: "Zur Kritik neuerer Geschichtschreiber." At that time Guicciardini's "Opere Inedite" had not yet been given to the world. But, while in Italy and elsewhere many writers considered these works to contain fresh proofs of the great value of their author's "History of Italy," Professor Ranke, on the contrary, held them to give added weight to his own views, and accordingly reiterated his criticisms in the second edition of his work (dated 1874), which was substantially identical with the first.

The two main charges he brings against Guicciardini are these: That in narrating events unshared or unseen by himself, he copies so extensively from other writers, without quoting them, as to frequently merit the title of plagiarist. That, as regards events shared or seen by himself, he frequently gives either careless and second-hand accounts, or purposely distorts events in order to assume a greater and

the real interests of Italy, with a need that, if not strongly felt, was still very generally understood by the Italians Had Pescara really promoted the enterprise it might have achieved success, and by its success both he and Morone would have become very powerful personages. Therefore the proposal was made and accepted on the tacit and reciprocal understanding that should it prove impossible to attain the desired end, both would again devote themselves to the Emperor's cause. As we have seen, Morone had proved this by his deeds, when the Duke seemed to be at the point of death. Pescara, who had likewise gone very far, had also secured his own safety by revealing everything to Charles V. He had remained a member of the conspiracy, making his colleagues furnish supplies for the maintenance of the army, and had gone on in the increasing belief that, if manipulated by himself and the imperialists, Morone would prove an excellent instrument for the conquest of Italy, as soon as he, too, should realize the impracticability of the plot. Besides, as events afterwards showed, Morone was specially adapted to point out from whom most money could be extorted in Italy, and the imperialists were so constantly in need of funds as to frequently find themselves on the point of having to disband their troops. Morone, too, was very wealthy, and might furnish supplies from his own pocket, as he afterwards furnished them to De Bourbon.

Accordingly, when Pescara had him in his grasp, he subjected him to trial rather as a matter of form and to extort money, or in order to have a slight pretext for seizing Lombardy, than in the hope of obtaining any new disclosures. His unusual benignity, and his recommendation of him to the Emperor, were certainly dictated by his desire to win for the imperial cause the co-operation of one who had avowed himself ready to serve it, and might prove to be of the highest utility.

This conspiracy, therefore, teaches us that the idea of making Italy achieve her independence by means of her own resources, was present to many minds, and might have been accomplished had any great and valiant leader arisen to carry it out by force of arms. For, although Italy was weak, her enemies were at war with one another, and so disorganized as to be often on the verge of ruin almost without being attacked. But the required leader was not forthcoming. At decisive moments every one sought to act on his own account, and all genuine combination of forces became an impossibility. This idea of national independence, although so often discussed since the days of Julius II., was then welcomed by the Italians rather from literary enthusiasm, and for

by the sack of Rome ("Storia di Firenze," vol. ii pp. 139-41), it will be seen that Guicciardini could have no reason to wish his share in arranging the agreement to be known in Rome, and that his silence on this point, in his letter, is very easy to understand.

Nor can it be said that other historians prove his account to be false, because, while recognizing the great part he had in arranging the agreement, they give no details of a conversation that was necessarily unknown to them, seeing that it took place between him and Federigo alone, and he could not then desire to make it public. Nardi says that the Cardinals dreaded a riot, and the besieged, seeing that resistance was impossible, gave ear to the terms proposed, and that the agreement was concluded, when Federigo da Bozzolo and then Guicciardini came to the Palace and promised that all should be forgotten. ("Storia," vol. ii. pp. 137-39.) Vettori says that Cardinal Ridolfi and Guicciardini, wishing to avoid violent means, sent Federigo da Bozzolo to the Palace. Failing to come to terms, Federigo went again with Guicciardini, and the agreement was then concluded. After which, he, Vettori, put the convention on paper, and it was signed by the Cardinals, the Duke of Urbino and Messer Federigo. This proves that the account given by Pitti and accepted by Ranke was false, since it states that the deed was written by Guicciardini in his legal capacity, because he was a lawyer. Nerli speaks very briefly of the incident; Varchi wrote much later and by order of the Medici, and Pitti followed. We cannot deny that Guicciardini, in his "Storia d'Italia," sometimes indulges in too much self-praise, and that even on this occasion, his tone showed little modesty. But it seems clear to us that his narrative of the April riot of 1527 is neither disproved by other historians, nor by his own letter, and that there is nothing improbable in it.

We now come to another incident, regarding which Professor Ranke repeats the same charges. In 1521, when Guicciardini was Governor of Reggio d'Emilia, the French attempted to seize that city. In his "History" he describes the affair in detail, and speaks highly of his own conduct. He writes that one day the General Lescut appeared before the walls with 400 men-at-arms, and asked to speak with the Governor, who immediately went to meet him at one of the gates The General complained that French exiles were granted admission within the papal territories, and the Governor replied that it was worse when the French entered them sword in hand, without permission Meanwhile some soldiers attempted to enter by another gate left open by chance, and the Reggians made resistance and fired upon them And the disturbance spreading, they also fired at the General's escort, wounding some of the number, and would have aimed at the General himself, had they not feared to hit the Governor who stood near him. The French took to flight, and the General was much alarmed, but Guicciardini gave him shelter in a safe place, reassured him, and then sent him away unharmed. This he did, because he had passed his word to Lescut, and had commands from the Pope to avoid giving offence to the King of France.

Here Ranke observes that soon afterwards Guicciardini gave a very different account of this event in a letter to Cardinal dei Medici ("Opere Inedite," vol. vii. p. 281). In this letter he neither mentions the flight of the French, nor the dismay of their General, nor his own generosity in saving him. Why did Guicciardini, who was always ready to sing his own praises, keep silence as to what was most honourable to himself? Here, then, is another invention of the untrustworthy historian, afterwards refuted by his own words. But here, also, the "History" amply explains the silence preserved in the letter. Guicciardini's conduct in liberating General Lescut was much blamed, in the belief that had he kept him a prisoner, the Milanese State would have risen against the French. This hope, Guicciardini remarks, was very ill-founded, since the French who took flight were few in number, and at a short distance off found Federigo da Bozzolo and a thousand foot soldiers, so that they speedily halted and fell into order. ("Storia

more honourable part in them than he really had. Indeed on this head Professor Ranke finds added testimony in the "Opere Inedite," because, in his opinion, Guicciardini recounts certain events in the "Letters" and "Legations," in a very different way from that afterwards employed in his "History."

We will begin with a fact that specially concerns us, as one of those also narrated by ourselves. Speaking of the first riot of the year 1527 in Florence, Guicciardini relates in his "History" that he was the author of the agreement concluded between the citizens besieged in the Palace and the representatives of the Medici and the League. Federigo da Bozzolo had quitted the building, after being very badly received by the citizens, and was therefore resolved to advise the Cardinals Passerini, Cibo, and Ridolfi to adopt violent measures, feeling sure that it would be easy to force an entrance into the Palace. But Guicciardini dissuaded him from his purpose, begging him to reflect that it would lead to much bloodshed, whereat the Pope would be displeased. Accordingly, he accompanied Federigo back to the Palace, where they succeeded in arranging a written and signed convention. At first he was much praised for this, but was afterwards accused by both parties. The people said that Guicciardini, acting in the Medicean interests, had exaggerated the danger of the situation to the beleaguered citizens, and thus induced them to yield without necessity. On the other hand, Cardinal Passerini accused him of having taken more thought for the lives of the citizens shut in the Palace, and particularly for the safety of his brother, the Gonfalonier, than for the authority of the Medici, whose might have been permanently assured by force that day. ("Storia d'Italia," vol. ix. bk. xviii. pp. 42-44.) Here Professor Ranke remarks that all other contemporary historians say nothing on this head, assigning to Guicciardini the far less prominent part that he really played. The merit of deciding to avoid violence and bloodshed belongs to the Cardinals and Federigo da Bozzolo. Guicciardini was only summoned in his legal capacity to put the terms of the agreement in writing. His emphatic narrative is false, and was refuted in Jacopo Pitti's "Apologia dei Cappucci" ("Archivio Storico Italiano," vol. iv. part ii. anno 1843), and by the report made to the Datary by Guicciardini himself, a few hours after the event.

But, as regards Pitti, who was only eight years of age in 1527, he was a partizan of the Medici and the democratic faction, therefore hostile to Guicciardini, who was one of the Ottimati, and wrote at the time when the latter were out of favour with the Grand Duke Cosimo, who was then leaning on the democrats. The "Apologia dei Cappucci" was specially written in defence of the democrats against the Ottimati in general and Guicciardini in particular, and the latter being then in total disgrace, was a butt for accusations of every kind, some of which are too exaggerated and ridiculous to demand any refutation.

What did Guicciardini write to the Datary? In a letter dated the 26th of April, 1527 ("Opere Inedite," vol. v. p. 421), after describing the riot, he goes on to say that the government would have been overthrown, had the rioters taken to arms, instead of shutting themselves up in the Palace. He then adds that he and Federigo da Bozzolo went to the Palace to treat with the citizens, "and did so much, that on being assured of pardon, they (*the citizens*) were content to leave the Palace, which in fact could not be defended; but *it seemed to me* that to settle the matter in this gentle fashion was a benefit to the city and to the government, which can now feel safer than before with respect to the people, since the latter has proved of less account than was perhaps thought." This narrative therefore proves to the Datary that he, Guicciardini, preferred and was the author of a peaceable agreement; and only leaves unmentioned how he had first to bring round Federigo da Bozzolo, by telling him, for that end, that even the Pope would be ill-pleased by bloodshed. Now, when we remember that the Pope, on the contrary, was very displeased by the agreement, and, according to Nardi, would have taken a harsh revenge upon the revolted Florentines, but for being prevented